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JULIAN MELDOHLA

BY MARY MOSS

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I.

POOR ANDROMEDA!

A HIGHLY civilized looking elderly lady sat over a game of solitaire, in the kind of highly civilized room which well-to-do summer cottagers succeed in producing on the rugged shores of New England. The messy draperies and hideous cat-tails of pioneer home-makers had duly given way to well-arranged vases of flowers, clear chintzes covering luxurious arm-chairs, and convenient, short-legged tables of various kinds. The pleasant lamp-light showed only enough Botticelli photographs to mark a tolerant recognition of prevailing art foibles, the personal bent of the cottagers declaring itself in an array of gayly framed pictures of modishly attired men and women.

Two collections of books on the biggest table obviously represented the tastes of two people. One pile of volumes suggested an experimental young person whose pursuit of philosophers, ranging from Schopenhauer and Lassalle to the newest metaphysical psychologists, was evidently mitigated by digressions into a wide field of drama, poetry, and fiction, past and present.

On the other side of the table a novel of Hector Malot (by no means of the "Sans Famille" stripe), Labouchère's *Truth, Town Topics* discreetly tucked under the *Churchman*, with two recent English novels, mild as new milk, seemed a complete index of the mental and moral status of the leisurely solitaire player. Finishing a successful lay, she glanced at the clock and rang a bell. At once a neat-capped maid appeared.

"Bring my wrap, Jane, and tell Miss Edith it's past nine o'clock. The carriage has been waiting nearly half an hour."

At that minute there appeared in the doorway a blonde, slim girl, whose soft, creamy dress was of that artful simplicity which makes every frill seem as spontaneous as the petals of a delicate flower.

"For a person whose hair curls naturally, Edith," commented Mrs. Brand, "you take a remarkably long time to dress."

"There's no hurry," said the girl. "Let's put on our gloves here."

Edith Linton spoke low and quickly, but with a certain salt personal flavor both in voice and enunciation which gave unwarrantable interest to her most trifling remarks. There was a cadence—minor, yet hinting at secret fires—which seemed the natural expression of her pale, oval face, the face of a rebel. She looked full of irregular energy, unspent emotion, dewy eyed, nervous about the lips, sensitive. It was a face promising treasures of feeling, also endless perversity, capacity for pain or happiness, and no small nobility. To her guardian, Mrs. Brand, she merely appeared a creditable niece whose crying fault was a habit of rejecting eligible suitors.

Sinking into a deep chair, Edith began pulling on her long suède gloves with much deliberation.

"You are a wise woman, Aunt Margaret. Can you imagine why I'm going to Mrs. Warfield's music party to-night?"

"For just the same reason that takes me and all the other people," answered the elder lady ruthlessly, "because you'd rather go than stay at home."

Looking thoroughly depressed, Edith nestled flexibly among the cushions. "Really," she said, "I suppose you are right, but how nice if you'd said it was my sense of social duty or something like that." With a sudden sparkle of amusement in her hazel eyes she went on: "Of course, everybody knows why a girl goes out. At first she honestly expects to meet her fate at every party, and by the time she's my age she's forgotten how to be amused at home. I often think how bored poor Andromeda must have been. Still, if the right young man didn't turn up, at least she was certain of being comfortably put an end to by her monster."

"Do you know, Edith," Mrs. Brand spoke in all seriousness, "the kind of moonlit melancholy expression you have at times is all very well at twenty-two, but you run the risk of getting a discontented look before you are thirty. I suppose," she continued, "that your dark eyebrows and light hair make it taking enough now, but it isn't a wise expression to cultivate: it brings wrinkles."

"I'm ready. Shall we go?" Edith interrupted, restive under the directness of Mrs. Brand's eminently practical views. Flippancy was the girl's usual defence against such exhortations, but to-night she

lacked spirit for her customary sallies, and reached Mrs. Warfield's in a state of complete dejection.

The music had already begun. A near-sighted young lady with hands like angry dragons was playing the "Fifth Hungarian Rhapsody." She glared over her shoulder as Edith, much against her will, was marshalled into a conspicuous seat. This seat had the further disadvantage of putting her at the mercy of a budding admirer who could hardly wait for the intermission to buzz ineptitudes.

"Fine thing that, Miss Linton. Think I've heard it somewhere before. Didn't you like the way she did it?" he asked.

"Immensely," said Edith, too depressed for resistance.

"So did I, so did I!" he went on, much encouraged. "I'm really passionately fond of music. This thing is tremendously scientific and all that, but I enjoy it just the same. Of course, it's not Wagner."

It gave Edith no trouble to assent to this discriminating criticism, and feeling that he was creating a really favorable impression, the young man gave full rein to his enthusiasm, explaining: "But, naturally, in a piece like that you can't have a story. There's where Wagner is so splendid. By Jove, Miss Linton, I call those operas elevating. Italian music was well enough in its day,—pretty, you know,—but the influence isn't like his. Now take the 'Ring.' Having gods and heroes and all that makes his plots in a way almost religious, like the Oberammergau 'Passion Play.' A man's the better for hearing them."

Wondering which feature it was that gave his face such a quality of ugliness, Edith answered gravely: "It is very interesting, Mr. Wheatly, that the family relations of the Volsungs should be so inspiring."

Mr. Wheatly looked at her with a moment's doubt, but the expression of her down-curved lips and half-closed, melancholy eyes gave no hint of sarcasm.

At this minute the pianist was succeeded by an emotional soprano, an amateur of pleasing appearance, who sang with an abandoned passion untrammelled by hampering concessions to time, pitch, or rhythm. Her voice raised her body from the floor, she trembled all over, till it seemed as if she could hardly survive the last stanza, "For my race is the race of the Azra, and when we love we die," and her manner implied that she must have loved and died at least a half-dozen times.

During the rapturous burst of applause which greeted this performance, Edith noticed a strange young man whose enigmatical expression gave her a wish to hear his opinion of the music. He was rather lean, dark, with a clear-cut, compact beauty of feature that did not irritate or offend her taste. She even felt as if some brains might be stowed away under that thick, crisp brown hair.

With regret she looked from him to the next singer, a dramatic

barytone with immense powers of chest expansion and a full-blown tenor temperament. This gentleman "rendered" a well-known setting of "Danny Deaver," vividly impersonating the Sergeant, the murdered comrade, the listener, the officer, and the drums. At the passing of Danny Deaver's soul, subtly emphasized by a high falsetto note, the audience was fairly captivated.

Edith stole a glance at the strange young man, whose immaculate white gloves met in decorous applause.

Mrs. Warfield fluttered about the piano in the worried state of a hostess who has provided one "number" too many and feels how much her guests would prefer supper. The superfluous singer was a plain, stocky woman in spectacles, with a hiatus of stringy arms between gloves and elbow-sleeves. Standing immovably upright by the piano, without other facial change than opening a wide German mouth, she sang the "Sappische Ode" of Brahms. Her thrilling voice welled forth with the distinction of delivery and phrasing, with the beautiful simplicity, only possible to a very great artist. The quiet sadness of the song penetrated Edith's very heart; her habitual flippancy vanished in a wave of longing and emotion till she had much ado to keep down unbidden tears and quite forgot to applaud. Of all the audience the strange young man alone showed any enthusiasm. The rest gave a polite but perfunctory round of fan and finger tapping. He had left his seat and was talking easily to the singer.

As Edith noticed this, he turned quickly, catching her eye full. Instead of at once looking away, he frankly smiled.

Contriving to mislay the intelligent Mr. Wheatly in the stir consequent upon supper, Edith fell prey to one Mr. Oscar Tottinghame, a really cultivated young man, only distinguishable by dress from the most refined of her own sex. Reduced to that passive state of boredom in which a victim fatalistically turns the other cheek for any buffet Fate may purpose dealing, she had lost all hope of rescue when Mrs. Warfield appeared at her elbow.

"Edith, may I present a cousin of mine? Miss Linton, Mr. Julian Meldohla."

It was the strange young man. Edith would have given the world not to flush with the guilty consciousness of having been caught watching him, but he seemed not to see her heightened color, and merely asked if he might bring some supper.

"I am waiting on Miss Linton," put in Mr. Oscar Tottinghame, feeling it time to assert his prior claim to her company.

"Thank you, Mr. Tottinghame,"—she gave him a most gracious smile,—*"do please bring me a lot to eat. I'm perishing of hunger."*

As her admirer vanished in the crowd, the stranger's manner underwent an undefined change.

"Miss Linton," he began, his voice and way of speech suiting even Edith's fastidious ear, "may I apologize for trying to catch your eye when you were looking at Madame Barth just now? I couldn't help it. It was because of a sudden conviction that only you and I knew how good her song had been."

With an upward sweep of dark lashes Edith deliberately inspected him. "Why do you say that?" she asked seriously. "You know perfectly well what happened."

For a second he looked at her strangely with an intensity that made her draw her breath in expectation. She had a sense of something happening, something fateful, but in a flash he was answering gayly enough:

"Very well, if you choose to start our acquaintance on a basis of perfect frankness, but wouldn't it have been a little risky for me to—well—to say that we had been watching each other? A person of your careful bringing up and perverse disposition might have looked me over in utter astonishment and repudiated the idea with contumely."

"Perverse!" Edith began to feel amused. "I didn't know you had been talking to my aunt."

"Didn't know you had an aunt, but I'm not so stupid as to have to be told the most self-evident facts."

"Dear me!" said the girl, "am I as cross-looking as all that?"

"Yes!" His glance measured her queerly as he answered. "When people haven't the eyes that go with their hair or the voice of their complexions, ordinary citizens who are all of a piece should trim down sail. You've an olive brunette way of speaking, and pale yellow hair."

"How did you like 'Danny Deaver'?" Edith asked with growing remoteness.

"Just exactly as well as you did, and we aren't going to waste ten seconds talking about it. I wonder," he added after a pause, during which they watched each other curiously, "if the prophets enjoyed seeing their predictions come true."

"Why, of course," Edith was glad to find him so ready to take a hint; "everyone likes to say, 'I told you so.'"

"Not everyone." He was mischievously triumphant now. "For instance, though I expected it, it's not the slightest satisfaction to me to find that you don't play fair. You invite me to be quite truthful and friendly, and then insulate yourself, vanish into space at the first whiff of frankness. You're utterly pampered; that's the whole trouble," he turned an appreciative eye on her frills, "and you haven't even the grace to be contented. Do you really think you are behaving nicely?"

"What a horrid noise these people make!" Edith felt the force of his argument, but was not to be lured into debate.

"Yes," he assented, "isn't it beastly! Look here, are you really hungry?"

Edith shook her head.

"Then let us slip out of this mob. I know such a nice place, a quiet place where we can talk sensibly about the music."

Edith doubted the wisdom of such a course, but her better judgment was overborne by the sight of Mr. Oscar Tottinghame steering through the crowd followed by a pair of waiters who seemed to be carrying two entire dinners.

"Do you realize that it is moonlight outside and warm, as you don't find it here twice in a summer, and we are mewed up in a stuffy room.

"*„Stüsser hauchten Duft sie, als je am Tage,“*"

the stranger hummed under his breath for her ear alone in a voice slight and unimportant, but true beyond reproach and full of charm.

Just then Mr. Tottinghame stopped to shake hands with a friend. He raised his hand too high, the muscles treacherously following a departed fashion. Edith resented this absurdity. Mr. Meldohla might need repressing, but there wasn't the slightest fear of his making himself ridiculous, and under his adroit guidance she made a hasty exit through a series of deserted rooms to a little balcony from which, through tops of pointed fir-trees, there was a glimpse of moonlit water with shadowy islands far beyond. Fresh salt air drifted in, sweet and languorous with the scent of balsam-pines. There was no sound but the rustle of boughs, the hum of night insects, and an occasional ripple of water softly lapping the base of rocks deep below them. Resting her hands on the balustrade, Edith leaned out into the moonlight, drawing a long breath of fragrant air.

Hidden by dark shadow, the young man was content to wait. Her looks filled him with such unreasonable pleasure that he almost preferred a silence which left him free to absorb the mere physical joy of her presence. He wanted to touch her. The heady summer night made his imagination play wild pranks. It was plain to him that the deliciousness of kissing her would be beyond all other sweetness in life. It was also plain that she was whimsical, easily put to flight, and that for all her trustfulness, a finger laid on so much as one outlying frill would banish him from her presence in disgrace. Then he wanted to hear her voice again, there in the still, sweet moonlight.

"Now I know what you look like," he began.

Sitting lightly on the balustrade, she leaned against a pillar, looking out over the water. Her answer came wide of his speech.

"It gives me a ghostly feeling talking into that depth of shadow. If you were to sit there, facing me,—it's a very luxurious rail, and there's another pillar for you too. Now we are on a more equal footing, Mr.—Mr.——"

"Meldohla," he supplied, going on in a tone of humorous upbraiding. "Equality! That's too bad! And I took you for an old-fashioned girl——" He hesitated over the last word with an inflection as bad as if he had said *angel* outright.

"Your grounds?" She felt an unaccustomed dislike to checking his bent for personal talk.

"My grounds! You don't look athletic, you don't look ill. Modern women must be one or the other."

Edith laughed with much gayety. She had half feared, half coveted, an over-direct compliment, but Julian's intermittent self-control suggested to him the wisdom of allaying her doubts of his discretion. Secretly he could only compare her to some tantalizingly alluring flower; not a flower either, there was too much sense of human blood and fire about her, for all her delicacy of line and texture. Then, forgetting himself, he leaned forward and gazed too earnestly at her face.

"I thought you wanted to talk about the music—sensibly, Mr. Meldohla." Ruffled by his scrutiny, she spoke abruptly. "You are a musician?"

"No, lady, only a lawyer, fond of law, fond of fees, also of music and all nice things,"—he paused,—"very fond of this balcony at this minute!"

She moved as if to rise, and he went on soberly: "But we are wasting valuable time. Evidently you are a serious person misfitted with a miserably frivolous exterior. From your looks you might be just some commonplace young thing like Juliet—or Rosalind, while really you're remarkable for intelligence and thirst to converse on topics. I'm intelligent too, full of culture! Try me. Have you a question ready?"

She shook her head lazily.

"Well," he pondered, "here's a subject for debate. If the 'Rubaiyat,' green limp Roycroft cover, Miss Linton, is to us as 'Lucile' was to our fathers——"

"Oh," cried Edith, "what a poisonous idea!"

"Let me finish, Miss Linton. This is very subtle. Now you've put me all out—oh, yes!—at what angle between the two was the world struck by 'Aux Italiens'?"

Edith's melancholy had vanished in the friendliest mirth. "Oh, dear," she said. "I wish it wasn't so late and we could talk that out, but my aunt goes to bed early."

"One minute, please, just a minute, Miss Linton." The young

man was too crafty openly to oppose her leaving. "Please stand here and see the red revolving light. Look out between the pine-boughs towards the island. Do you see? Oh, don't say 'Maeterlinck.' This isn't a symbolist lighthouse. It's a practicable light and works like anything to keep people off rocks. That's why I've had to watch it so closely to-night. If it hadn't been there——"

"Are you here, Edith?"

Mrs. Warfield, highly apologetic, stood in the long French window. "Mrs. Brand says if you are quite ready to go——"

"Now I wonder," thought Edith, "how Mrs. Warfield reconciles her New England conscience to tampering so shamelessly with Aunt Margaret's message."

II.

RATHER A QUEER PARSON

EDITH awoke the next morning to a dismal aftermath of repentance for various indiscretions committed over-night. In the background lay an uneasy sense of having entirely departed from her usual code in letting a stranger, a man with a queer name, dispense with every preliminary and behave like a friend of long standing. Friend! She felt the word to be disingenuous, but balked at using even to herself a fitter term. In the foreground of her troubles loomed the fact of having agreed to spend the afternoon with Mr. Tottinghame hunting up the lair of a fabled teapot supposed to be hoarded away by the postmaster's mother-in-law. In making this appointment Edith had felt so sure of not surviving the ennui of the party that to promise anything seemed a trifling act, quite devoid of consequences. To-day she found herself in the toils of a tiresome expedition, yet her conventionally bred conscience shrank from throwing it over in cold blood.

On a long, solitary morning ride she meditated gloomily on the flatness of life, now and again pricked into active discomfort by the memory of certain moments on the balcony when she had unaccountably let a stranger inside her guard; yet the reflection that he would probably vanish into the outside world from which he came failed to afford her complete satisfaction.

At lunch she was taciturn and dispirited. Mrs. Brand, on the other hand, having no sins to repent of, felt pleasantly chatty and disposed for questions.

"Don't you think," the elder lady began, "that professional singers could be made to understand the importance of dressing properly before they come into a lady's drawing-room? That German woman last night was simply a guy. Her skirt cocked up in front and showed her boots—heavy laced boots. The man was quite presentable, but then they say his mother was a gentlewoman."

"The woman could sing," Edith put in, somewhat aggressively.

"Well, perhaps she could, but in a parlor appearance makes such a difference. And that reminds me, Edith, talking of appearances. You know I don't often interfere, but for you to run off completely away from all of us with a perfectly strange young man—and poor Mr. Tottinghame was hunting for you everywhere."

"Mr. Tottinghame is a bore. He's a tiresome little tame cat," said Edith vindictively. "He hasn't a soul above teapots."

"My dear! He's most intelligent and cultivated, and you are too contrary for words. I've often heard you laugh at George Wheatly for not knowing about such things."

"Yes," admitted Edith, always ready for theorizing, "but really, crass ignorance like his is less exasperating than Tottinghame's dilettanteism."

"I don't see what you mean." Mrs. Brand's way of saying this invariably implied an inherent lack of meaning.

"Why, I can hardly explain." Edith was trying to follow out an elusive line of thought. "Art seems a tricky pursuit for men. If a person just dabbles in it without producing, without making some sacrifice, it seems emasculating. I wonder——"

"And this Mr. Meldohla?" Mrs. Brand was not to be side-tracked. "How did he talk?"

"How?" Edith was hardly prepared to formulate. "I don't know. Not affectedly; what he said had the right ring. He knew about music."

"Still,"—Mrs. Brand had no wish to hear Julian's abstract criticisms,—"I trust you won't repeat last night's performance with him or anyone else."

"Oh Aunt Margaret," Edith stretched out her arms wearily, "life is so prone to dullness. Why not take a little amusement when it drifts your way? Hardly anything pays for the trouble, and when a good five minutes comes along it seems so stupid to let it slip."

"Really, child, you do provoke me. I don't see what more you can want. "You're good-looking,"—Edith frowned,—"though you are so ridiculous about anyone's saying so; you wouldn't like to be ugly. You have plenty of money and more of your own way than is at all good for you."

Edith shifted her ground. "I'm lonely."

"Well, of all the absurd ideas, with people coming after you at every hour of the day and night!"

"I know, but—oh! sometimes I think it's living abroad and coming back after I was grown. Other girls have their school-friends, people they have known all their lives. I just see women at dinners and in dressing-rooms at parties, and we're different. I feel strange. But that's not it,—not all, at least."

"What on earth?" Mrs. Brand was scornful.

"Something in me." Edith's voice was vibrant with suddenly released emotion. "It's a duality that hurts. I often think it a clumsy arrangement, being born of men and women; it gives a mixed nature from the start, and——"

"Edith!" Mrs. Brand was honestly scandalized, but the girl went on passionately.

"You don't understand! You never felt as I do, as if your fibre were so unravelled that it could never make a good, serviceable life-line. Half the time my blood seems at war with itself, as if hostile races had chosen me for a battlefield." She paused, fairly quivering with excitement, suddenly asking, "Are you sure my mother didn't come of some strange people?"

Mrs. Brand looked distinctly annoyed.

"You know, Edith, how painful I find it to speak of that. As I've often told you, when your father married he was extremely poor, and your mother's family, rich, vulgar Westerners utterly unable to appreciate what he offered her, chose to treat him as a mere fortune-hunter and behaved so badly to my poor brother that your mother herself saw the necessity of breaking off all intercourse."

Edith asked no further questions. Her efforts to know more of a mother who hardly seemed to have part in her were always checked by an odious suspicion. Her mother must have been objectionable too. Then why had her father married her? Was it that he had been poor at the time? A person who dabbles in Herbert Spencer and Darwin naturally shrinks from the knowledge of two undesirable parents. Beneath this there lay another feeling. Her mother had been young, inexperienced. With such a difference between her and her husband, could she have been happy? Edith had visions of a lonely girl, ill and afraid of life.

Mrs. Brand was summing up with vigor. "As for being strange in any romantic way, they were as commonplace as possible. Really, you should be only too thankful to be free from such a bourgeois connection."

"Well!" Edith's fire had burnt out, leaving her pale and inanimate. "I suppose it's only original sin that makes me so restless, and—— What is it, Jane, a note?"

"Yes, Miss, the messenger is waiting for an answer."

Edith read:

"DEAR MISS LINTON: Will you sympathize with my honeymoon of satisfaction over a new canoe, and may I come for you this afternoon at four? Unless the wind changes, we can easily paddle over to the island for tea.

"Yours sincerely,

"JULIAN MELDOHLA."

"Very well, Jane, there's no answer," said Edith indifferently. "If he comes, in spite of that," she inwardly resolved, "and if Mr. Tottinghame doesn't get here first, I'll go. Of course, he won't come," she reassured herself, glancing speculatively at Mrs. Brand. But at ten minutes before the hour Julian drove up to the door.

Edith met the young man in a most uneasy mood, but fear of Mr. Tottinghame's appearance stifled her sense of guilt in unseemly haste to be off.

"The canoe is at your slip now. Shall we go?" Julian asked, seeing that she made no suggestion of his sitting down.

"Yes, please. I do hate to be in the house a minute these lovely afternoons," said Edith, considerably nettled at his making so sure of her, but constrained to hurry by a sound of distant wheels, she added, "We can go out this window, it's quicker than the door."

As they started down a footway winding through a grove to the tiny landing-place, Edith distinctly heard the vibrations of Mrs. Brand's competent front-door bell, and her manner betrayed such a wish for speed that Julian helped her into the canoe and pushed off with an expedition which left no time for talking.

Once under way, he laid down his paddle. "May I get out of this, Miss Linton?" and hardly waiting for her permission, pulled off his spotless white coat.

From under her parasol Edith inspected him with a criticism that was almost hostile. Unimpeachably fresh, neat and well groomed, he had no air of being conscious either of admirable clothes or of the strong muscles whose play showed clearly through the fine brown skin of his sinewy arms. She was looking for flaws, for something to justify the irritation she felt towards him. He took things too much for granted; he—she didn't know what; he gave her a sensation of discomfort, of self-consciousness. Then she grew really vexed at discovering the pleasure she felt in watching his quiet strokes, the alertness of his expression as he carefully put the canoe end on to the wash of a passing steamer. In the rise and fall of one large swell her lace-bordered parasol dipped into the water, scattering a shower of drops over her knees.

"Oh, your pretty frock!" he exclaimed repentantly.

"Water won't hurt it." Her voice sounded distinctly cross.

"Here we are at the island already," said Julian. "Steady! Can you get out here?"

Without reply, she sprang lightly ashore and, leaving him to make fast the boat, strolled along the cliffs. In a minute he was at her side.

"What's the matter?" he asked so abruptly that she turned astonished eyes full on him.

"Never mind, don't answer," he went on,—“at least, not till we've

found some shade. Who'd have dreamed Maine could be so hot. Oh, here's a place on that rock under the pine-tree."

Passively Edith followed him and docilely took the seat he chose, while he pulled on his coat and stood leaning against the tree, looking fixedly down at her.

"Have you any notion, the faintest notion," he began seriously, "of all the things I am laying up against you?"

She merely shook her head.

"Well, to commence. Last night you were—oh dear, how can I say it?—tame enough to eat out of the hand till you had me thoroughly fooled, and then you were off like a flash with never so much as 'Good-night' or a word of meeting again."

Edith laughed with much friendliness.

"There you are again, as nice, as nice as ever girl could be, and when I came into the parlor over yonder you looked so remote, so distrustful—and in the boat you were so cross I only dared to speak once, and then you nearly took my head off—and yet, yet,"—his tone relented "and grew beguilingly gentle,"—"you've given me this blessed afternoon, and it's summer and heavenly warm, the air is good with bay leaves and the scent of roses?" He broke off questioningly.

"Do you want me to be quite honest?" Edith asked, looking not at him, but inland, where a wild half-breed woman was urging a refractory cow along a rough, narrow path leading to the tea-house. Near Julian and Edith a bleating tethered calf revealed the cause of the cow's reluctance.

"We shall have new milk for our tea," the girl went on as he gave no sign of answering.

"Do I want you to be honest?" Still leaning against the tree, he spoke doubtfully. "Well, yes, I suppose I do, but," he added, a trifle rueful, "honesty can be tempered with mercy, can't it?"

Edith's eyes followed the distant cow as she lurched in a vain effort to double on her sunbonneted pursuer.

"It's this, Mr. Meldohla: I don't like to be intimate with people all at once. You go too quick; it—it annoys me. If I'm disagreeable, if my manners are bad, don't come near me, but you've no right to scold." "Now, if he says that I began it last night, if he remembers it's all my fault, I'll never forgive him as long as I live," reflected Edith.

"And do you really think,"—he had left the tree and was standing over her so close that she felt much inclined for flight,—“do you really think that life is long enough for such nonsense? Never mind that cow. Look at me a minute, please.”

Edith's eyes met his. Coloring, she looked away. No, she might be sure; he would never again say that she had been the first to sweep

aside preliminary formalities, but he knew it! She wondered if he didn't know about Mr. Tottinghame and the teapot too.

Suddenly he began in quite a different key: "Forgive me, please," he begged, humbly enough, "only don't send me away. Please don't be cross and stand-offish and change so often and so quickly that I can't keep the pace. But if you must, of course, I'd a million times rather it was you at your worst——"

"Really, Mr. Meldohla,"—the minute Edith had spoken, to her own ears her voice rang so like Mrs. Brand's that at once she became conciliating,—“isn't it time for us to be moving? The shadows are growing longer already.”

Reluctantly Julian looked towards the tea-house. "By Jove!" his voice betrayed the deepest disgust, "just look there."

She saw heading inland a small, agile lady, not young, in a short skirt. Following her came a herd of ponderous elderly women who, single file, struggling with long dresses and inactive muscles, picked their laborious way along the stony path. Their ranks were broken by one masculine form, a dapper bishop, unmistakable in knee breeches and gaiters.

"By the Lord!" Julian gasped. "What happens, Miss Linton, when you don't get your tea? It's a very long, very rough walk over there. You saw yourself how hard it was for the cow, and—there goes an old lady. I hope the tumble didn't hurt her."

The sight of his discomfiture quite restored Edith's composure.

"If you were to smoke a cigarette," she hazarded, "we might wait here a few minutes longer, then you can paddle me home before these dangerous gorgons come back to the landing. But you must tell me which of the ladies you're so afraid of."

"You don't smoke?" he offered her a cigarette. "No? I'm so glad."

"Which lady?" Edith was ruthless.

"You are all wrong." He was gay enough now. "I'm not afraid except of spoiling another man's pleasure. It's pure consideration. Those legs and gaiters belong to the Right Reverend Osmond Alaric Satterthwaite, Bishop of Eastern Freshwater and my stepfather."

"And the sight of you?"

"Has been a little distasteful to him ever since I positively refused to be a parson."

"A parson!" Edith's tone showed no love for the cloth.

"Miss Linton," Julian's voice fairly sparkled with amusement, "you've seen people learning to skate when their legs fly out in front and they just sit down."

Edith nodded.

"That's exactly how the Bishop yielded, with that same grace and

good-will, and we have hardly met since. Wouldn't it be a shame to ruin this afternoon by turning up now to remind him of a fight where he'd been bested?"

"Wouldn't you have been rather a queer parson?" Edith was forgetting to be strictly impersonal.

"Queerer than you think." He had suddenly grown serious. "Some day, not now, perhaps you will let me tell you about it."

On the homeward trip Edith became conscious of a growing panic which distracted her from any attempt at conversation. It had been so easy to run away from Mr. Tottinghame that till now she had not reckoned the cost of explaining her behavior either to him or to the much more formidable Mrs. Brand. Whether because the Bishop's proximity exercised a chastening influence, or out of sympathy with her mood, her new friend showed an unexpected gift of silence. A sense of evening stillness possessed the world. A tranquil, rayless sunset, partly obscured by massive lines of purple mountain, cast no light on the quiet water. Their canoe glided noiselessly towards the mainland. Once under the lee of the shore they were already in twilight. Penetrating odors of polleny flowers were wafted seaward. On tree-tops tiny specks of birds, black against the sky, lavished good-night songs of poignant sweetness. The bugle-call from an anchored man-of-war came floating across the harbor. Their eyes met.

"Isn't it strange," said Julian, "all the best things in life, no matter how different, give you exactly the same feeling?"

Edith paused a minute, then answered dreamily. "Strange! I'm not sure it's strange. Certain things, certain moments, pierce through all outer husks and reach the thing that's you. It's a little point somewhere, sometimes only a point of pain, and again it's joy like this, pure joy, that makes you hope that life is worth while, since it can hold such peace, such beauty."

Watching her tender, white face and dusky, musing eyes, the young man felt the need of forcing himself back to earth for fear of saying everything that quivered on his lips.

"Put on my coat, do, please, Miss Linton. These evening shadows hold a chill."

Grateful at his not forcing the note, Edith threw his coat over her shoulders, then wished she had not. The contact gave her a sense of undue intimacy which brought back constraint and self-consciousness. They landed and walked to the house in unbroken silence.

Julian put his hand on the door-bell without ringing. "Have you been to Norman's Point lately, Miss Linton? You know they've thrown a bridge over the stream, and now a horse can go the whole way through the woods and out on the cliff at the very end where

there's such a sweep of sea. The tide will be coming in to-morrow afternoon. Won't you ride there in time to see the surf?"

Edith had returned his coat, but its influence was still upon her. She shook her head and answered briefly, "It takes too long."

"Why——" he began in remonstrance, then broke off, and, ringing the bell, raised his hat with some formality. "Good-by, then."

As he turned to leave, suddenly she found the ride full of allure-ment.

"Mr. Meldohla! I'm free the day after!"

"At four, then." His voice was a model of cheerful common-place, but when he left her his leaping pulses sent him on the home-ward way singing under his breath in that thread of a voice which never missed a note nor gave a false inflection.

III.

TEAPOT OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE

"MISS WYNDHAM was here, Miss," Jane announced as she closed the front door, "and Mr. Tottinghame and Mrs. Winthrop. Mrs. Brand saw them all."

Edith was one of those unlucky beings whose powers of resistance are seriously hampered by a guilty conscience. Some undefined thing in life had failed her, and half the time her real sweetness and tenderness were hidden by irritability and flippancy, but under this her courage and sense of justice never failed to ring true. Much as she hated a scolding, it was impossible for her to dodge it by quibble or subterfuge. Her uneasiness about Mr. Tottinghame had abated. He would simply bestow his attention elsewhere. But the worst was to be expected from Mrs. Brand. That sapient lady, however, had not the slightest intention of attaching odium to a thoroughly eligible suitor. A bad quarter of an hour endured on his account would be quite enough to put Edith in arms against him. Consequently she began with much urbanity: "Alice Wyndham looked so well this afternoon, Edith. She came to tell us that her wedding is to be in town in October. Her six first cousins are to be bridesmaids."

"Do you think she cares for him?" Edith asked, her question producing an odd effect of irrelevance.

"Cares for him! Of course! What an idea!"

"Well,"—Edith was genuinely interested in this problem,—"he and she are so exactly like quantities of other people that I should think, provided the wedding came off, it wouldn't matter in the least which of several thousand men or women either of them married."

"Really, Edith, it isn't often you are stupid," said Mrs. Brand, "but just think how much a man like Henry Sheppard would prefer such an equable, reliable girl as Alice to the most enticing will-o'-the-

wisp—you, for instance. You are infinitely cleverer, more individual, but you wouldn't suit him half so well."

"Now it's coming," thought Edith, but she was quite unprepared for her aunt's next speech.

"Oscar Tottinghame was here too," Mrs. Brand went on inscrutably. "He seemed to expect you to go off somewhere with him this afternoon, but I told him he must have made a mistake, or you had, because I distinctly remembered your saying you had an engagement with him to-morrow. He really was quite upset about it at first till I made it plain that you were looking forward to the expedition, whatever it is, so he will be here to-morrow."

Edith studied Mrs. Brand's open countenance. Its perfect serenity almost established belief in her aunt's sincerity. With a baffled sense of humorous despair the girl realized the difficulty of repudiating this statement without emphasizing the fact that twice within twenty-four hours she had thrown over an old friend for the sake of a strange young man, one Julian Meldohla.

The mere idea of putting such a revelation into words brought a wave of red color to her pale cheeks. Mrs. Brand saw the blush and was inwardly thankful that with all her unmanageableness Edith at least was sensitive enough to understand and take to heart the unspoken word. The real beauty of this checkmate was that it forced Edith into the position of being cordial to Mr. Tottinghame or proclaiming a preference for Julian Meldohla. Consequently she entered with apparent zeal into the pursuit of the teapot, not even resenting the glance of satisfied connoisseurship her companion cast upon her when they started upon their quest. It was extremely gratifying to Mr. Tottinghame's sense of completeness that, with an ability to carry off the most elaborate and exacting creations of French artist milliners, Edith should also show to advantage in a plain white linen frock. He surveyed the general correctness of her costume, the straight, scant skirt, short enough to give a glimpse of slim, flexible ankles, smart, brown shoes, crisp white shirt, hat, and gloves, with undisguised and totally impersonal approval.

"Mrs. Allen is her name," he explained, "and I've a clue to its being a teapot of the greatest importance. There is a legend of an auction in Portland a few years ago, where some genuine Lowestoft was knocked down for a mere song, bought by farmers and fishermen. Now it's more than likely that this piece may have come from there."

They were walking through a little street whose purely village character had triumphed over every encroachment of a growing watering-place. The blended odor of frying, kerosene, and nasturtium-flowers filled the air. In front of almost every cottage was a brilliant

garden, but Mrs. Allen's house, older than the rest, gave directly on the sidewalk. In answer to much knocking, the door was opened by a thickset person, unfresh, with the respectable fustiness of elderly women of her class. After considerable deliberation she ushered them into a room which smelt like the street intensified and minus the nasturtium-flowers.

Mr. Tottinghame purposed that this visit should be an occasion for impressing Edith with his subtlety and finesse, so he began with a tactful inquiry for some Sherraton chairs once a property of the Allen family.

While Mrs. Allen related their history, Edith's attention wandered to the question as to why poverty should be a reason for accumulating messy odds and ends. The room was really well enough equipped with decent furniture, but all available space was crowded with broken knick-knacks, dingy pictures, and every form of interior decoration advocated by the least conscientious Sunday papers. She was just debating whether gilded canary-seed or sliced shells made the more obnoxious picture-frame when the sound of her own name recalled her to the matter in hand.

"Miss Linton, if it were only teapots we were after, not chairs, Mrs. Allen has one she picked up in Portland, a very curious old one. How did you happen on it, Mrs. Allen?"

"Well,"—Mrs. Allen, innocent, garrulous old soul, enjoyed the chance of giving full rein to her talent for narrative,—“my brother Elmer heired a farm, Grout's Neck way, about ten miles south by west from Portland. The land is that poor you'd think no man could scratch a living out of it; but Edna, that's his wife, liked the place so—well, you may think how she liked that farm, if you'd call a thing a farm that was all stones and berry-bushes. The summer folks up to Grout's wanted to hire that land for their golf club, and while they was reading over the papers, before they signed the lease, Edna picks up a newspaper one of them had dropped, and in it she sees the three great causes for profanity in this country is quick lunch, petticoat government, and golf.

“‘That settles it,’ she says, ‘we have no quick lunch or petticoat government here,’ she says, ‘and I guess we ain't goin' to have any golf on our pasture.’

“Well, there was the greatest to do——”

“And how did it end?” Mr. Tottinghame made an effort to stem the tide.

“Oh, they settled it after a spell. The folks signed a paper that anyone using strong language had got to quit that club and——”

“And I suppose your sister-in-law went up to Portland to spend some of the rent?” Edith could not but think Mr. Tottinghame a gentle and resolute pilot.

"Yes, we rode in Elmer's carriage. Never again will I do that in a city. Next year we left the horse at home, he was so annoying."

Edith wondered just how the journey was accomplished without him, but thought it well to refrain from questions.

"He is a tall, brown horse," Mrs. Allen continued ruthlessly, "not very young nor mettlesome, but uppish. You couldn't exactly say he ran away, but on Main Street, where it's crowded, his tail would get over the reins and——"

Edith was beginning to take a real interest in the horse, but Mr. Tottinghame thought it was time to make a bold stroke.

"And so you went to the auction?"

Mrs. Allen seemed to feel a little rebuffed, and answered somewhat shortly, "Yes, and there we bought the teapot I was talking to you about. Folks who has seen it says it is real valuable, but my! what does an old woman like me know about such things. Seeing you've been so disappointed in the chairs," she added, relenting slightly, "I'd bring it down for you to look at, but it's in a chest under a lot of lumber, and I just said the last time I took it out I wouldn't lift those things again not under five dollars."

"Now we have taken up a great deal of your time this afternoon," said Mr. Tottinghame genially, "suppose I buy the teapot for five dollars and you go up and get it for me."

"Five dollars for that old thing! Why, it would be robbing you. You can get nice new ones, lovely colors, much better than this, for fifty cents!"

Mr. Tottinghame could scarcely control his glee. "Well, I suppose I want it as a souvenir of this afternoon."

With a sentimental glance at Edith, the old woman vanished up a crooked winding stairway.

"It's evidently the very thing I'm after," the gratified hunter whispered. "Think of the luck! Five dollars! Old Lowestoft is worth its weight in gold and hard to find at that!"

There was a sound of moving furniture overhead, a rumble, a bang.

"Good gracious! I hope she hasn't broken it," Edith exclaimed; but the old lady came down bearing in safety a small teapot the pattern of which was scarcely discernible through successive layers of grime.

Making their adieu somewhat briefly, the visitors hurried from the cottage and proceeded to examine their treasure in the bright afternoon sunlight. Even to Edith's amateurish eye it had a suspiciously modern look. Mr. Tottinghame turned quite pale and uttered a smothered something which would have endangered his membership in the pious Edna's golf club.

"You *can* get much better ones for fifty cents, for a quarter, I

should think." He spoke with real chagrin. "It's marked." He displayed the bottom, which after a hard rubbing revealed "Brooklyn, 1898."

Edith's desire to laugh was restrained by his evident humiliation. The whole thing was utterly absurd, but if he felt so badly it would be brutal so much as to crack a smile.

"It isn't the money," he went on bitterly, "but to be—diddled by that lying old woman!"

"There's one thing," said Edith consolingly, "no one need ever know what greenhorns we have been. She won't tell. Certainly you and I aren't bound to. Let's go to the rocks now and put stones in it and drop it in a deep pool where it will be covered even at low tide."

No sooner were the words out of her mouth than she regretted them, for Mr. Tottingham gave her a look of admiration elicited neither by her clothes nor her person. It was aimed straight at her soul, which he found more beautiful than either.

IV.

L'AFFAIRE

THE following day Edith was waked by the sound of rain on the piazza roof. It fell perfectly straight down, hard and unremittingly. Dense, snuff-colored fog shut out everything but the nearest branches of dripping oak- and hemlock-trees. This condition lasted for three mortal days, during which the events of Edith's existence narrowed into a note from Julian Meldohla asking if he might spend the afternoon with her, since riding was impossible. This she refused to let him do, shrinking from Mrs. Brand's spoken or unspoken comment, and passed the rest of the day assuring herself she had acted wisely.

On the evening of the second day she dined out. Julian sat at the other end of a long table and talked with much animation to Alice Wyndham. Edith remembered Mrs. Brand's remarks about the charm of equable young women and found her neighbors dull. They were at table from eight till ten-fifteen, and her carriage was announced before the men had come into the drawing-room.

On the third day she read one entire novel of Dostoiewski, a short story by Henry James, and a certain passage beginning:

"Siede la terra dove nata fui,
Su la marina dove il Po discendi
Per aver pace co' seguaci sui."

She also went to bed with a headache.

The fourth day broke radiantly clear, and her spirits grew momentarily lighter in spite of the fact that she was pledged to one of Mrs.

Warfield's miscellaneous lunch parties. This lady's theory of hospitality forbade her merely collecting a few people who liked to meet one another. With a conscientious desire to broaden and deepen society, she ruthlessly mixed young and old, frivolous and worthy. Even the difficulty of getting enough men never daunted her. Consequently Edith found herself in a strange aggregation of ladies wearing everything from caps to chiffon, sparsely picked out with an occasional reluctant frock-coat.

"Dear Edith," the hostess fluttered up to her, "we shall be so fortunate as to have with us to-day Miss Emily Pickering, whose able pamphlet on 'L'Affaire' has attracted so much favorable notice in Boston. I hope she may be induced to say something at lunch."

Though Edith's back was to the door, she suddenly grew conscious of a quickened heart-beat, the insistence of which made her resentful. What had come about when hearing Julian Meldohla's voice above the clatter of people's talk gave her distinct bodily sensations, as if something important were happening? The hostess flitted from one guest to another till the arrival of Miss Pickering, a ponderous, sombre personage, whose rich lace and jewels were destined to illustrate the perfect compatibility of public life and elegant womanhood.

"Shall we go in to lunch now?" For all her cosmopolitanism, Mrs. Warfield could never lay aside a little air of ceremony indefinitely reminiscent of Cranford. "Oh Mr. Meldohla! I believe you sit next Miss Linton."

"Is our ride on or off to-day?" asked the young man imperturbably, as they took their places at a large, round table profusely covered with flowers and exotic-looking sweetmeats.

Edith felt that he needed instant snubbing, and opened her mouth to say, "Off," but instead only asked, "Shan't we be rather late?"

"It's such a good day," he urged. "Get away as soon as you can after lunch. The surf will be worth seeing after the storm."

Edith weakly let her refusal go by default and began talking rather fast, at first hardly observing how small a part he took in the conversation. Finally, noticing his pallor and a certain odd air of constraint, she asked impulsively, "Are you ill? If not, this food is worth your attention." No sooner had the words passed her lips than she would have given the world to recall them, yet he had merely looked at her in silence.

From across the table Mrs. Warfield piped, "Miss Pickering has just received a cable from Rennes!"

"There seem to be eighteen more courses at least. Only count these forks and things," Julian said under his breath in a matter-of-fact tone. He saw that Edith had taken alarm, and meant, if phlegm could accomplish it, to undo the mischief of his too revealing glances.

"Was the cable from Madame Dreyfus herself?" asked an awestruck young lady from Northampton.

"No, from Madame Labori. I knew her when she was in America." Miss Pickering's style of utterance proclaimed her celebrity to the least perceptive ears. "Really, really," she intoned, "is there nothing the women of Boston can do? I have positive inside information that by next week the Rothschilds will withdraw their capital from France. If there could be at the same time a resounding demonstration in this country, the influence upon the decision could not fail to be striking and instantaneous."

"Think of the beauty of such a manifestation of sympathy," said Mrs. Warfield, undisguisedly wiping her eyes.

"Had the meeting better be in the State-House or on the Common? What do you think, Judge Winthrop?" asked a business-like old lady who wore a tea-gown.

"Don't forget to have it between twelve and one, so that the shop-girls and typewriters can come," put in the girl from Northampton.

"Mr. Meldohla," Miss Pickering's organ boomed straight at Julian, "you will surely give one of the addresses?"

"Oh, thanks, I sha'n't be free to go to Boston then." Julian looked so vexed that Edith, resenting the invasion of their privacy, whispered flippantly, "Aren't they a nuisance? Sputtering like catherine-wheels about their everlasting causes! Don't you honestly believe the negro, the English sparrow, and the Jew are probably getting their just deserts? For my part, though I've never known one to speak to, the look of their faces on Fifth Avenue of an afternoon is quite enough to convince me that Dreyfus is guilty."

Before Julian had time to answer, the decorum of the lunch-table was broken into by the most blood-curdling sounds, apparently coming from between the feet of one of the guests.

"Oh, dear, I'm so sorry. It's Carmen Sylva," cried Mrs. Warfield in deep distress as the company scrambled from the table. "Those high-bred Angoras are full of sensibility. She would lie just there and nowhere else, and I reminded her this morning that the noise of many people talking often threw her into convulsions!"

Amid a great deal of confusion and advice, a very young clergyman was spurred into seizing the unfortunate cat and drenching her with the contents of a large caraffe. Her twitching eyes at once became normal, and with a screech of perfectly healthy rage she bounded through an open window.

"Suppose we take our coffee in the garden under the new pergola?" said Mrs. Warfield.

Edith turned to speak to Julian, but he had vanished.

Although his abrupt departure seemed a little cavalier, she decided

to consider the engagement a positive one, and having dressed for the ride, stopped in Mrs. Brand's room to regale her with a spirited account of Carmen Sylva. The girl found her aunt in deep confabulation with a certain Miss Mary Parrish, a plaintive elderly lady whose complete lack of all affairs of her own had ended in her becoming a perfect treasure-house of information concerning other people's. As Edith paused on the threshold Mrs. Brand was saying: "Of course, I saw he had the look, but his being a cousin to Sophie Warfield and the Winthrops and all of them entirely threw me off the track. Oh Edith! Come in, dear. Cousin Mary is just telling me about your new Jewish friend, Mr. Meldohla. She used to know his mother."

With her last ounce of self-control Edith mechanically shook hands with Miss Parrish and sat on the arm of the sofa. Miss Parrish continued, really enjoying her narrative,—

"You see, Margaret, one disadvantage of living so long abroad as you did is that you lost sequence of so much that happened at home."

Sick and faint, Edith listened with the feelings of an eavesdropper. "As if it mattered now," she thought bitterly. "He wouldn't come; he would write, or, worse still, just stay away. How could she frame an apology without being guilty of an indelicacy worse than the offence?"

Miss Parrish was already under way. "Though she was sincerely attached to her first husband, poor Minnie always felt the sin of having married an unbelieving Jew, and I think it was a great relief to her conscience when the Bishop addressed her. Mr. Meldohla's people are big bankers or something in the East, and after her second marriage she never had any connection with them. They wanted the boy, but, of course, she wouldn't give him up."

"Was she left well off?" Mrs. Brand did not approve of scamping any detail.

"Oh, yes, quite a good deal. Not millions, but something very nice. And the Bishop was just like a father to the boy, called him Julian Satterthwaite and gave him every advantage, used every influence to fit him for the ministry. You see, Minnie was delicate and nervous, and she always felt that Julian's being in the Church would be a kind of expiation for her first marriage."

Mrs. Brand looked a little bored.

"But after her death"—the core of Miss Parrish's revelation was yet to come, and she approached it with relishing leisure—"the young man insisted on taking the name of Meldohla, refused to continue his theological studies, and would be a lawyer. I believe he has done very well too."

"After all, that's not so bad," Mrs. Brand remarked indulgently.

"Growing up in a houseful of women and curates, it showed some character to break loose and choose a career to his liking."

"Yes," said Miss Parrish solemnly, "if that had been all; but his behavior in other respects was so distressing."

"Still," Mrs. Brand felt lenient, "young men will be young men."

"Oh, no,"—Miss Parrish had reached her goal,—"it wasn't that. He never was in the least dissipated."

Edith, listening in silence, drew a painful breath of relief, then felt worse than before. So he was good too.

"It seems a dreadful thing to say," Miss Parrish was absolutely sincere in this, "but even a little wildness might have been better." Lowering her voice impressively, she went on: "He showed the most unnatural interest in everything Jewish. He made friends with some man—I think his name was Josephs—who took him to places and introduced him to people the Bishop couldn't possibly countenance. He went about with rabbis and did all sorts of things." Her manner hinted at any crime, from ritual murder to wearing diamond studs.

"That's pretty bad! Did he become a professing Jew?" asked Mrs. Brand.

"Not that I ever heard, though he doesn't go to church, but I'm told he actually pretends to be proud of his Hebrew connections." She sighed over such contumacy. "And his mother came of the nicest people," Miss Parrish concluded regretfully.

"It is a great pity." Mrs. Brand's air of finality closed the door on Julian forever, but Edith suddenly found voice to speak, a dry voice coming harshly from parched lips.

"How lucky I heard this before riding with Mr. Meldohla to-day! Now I must be very careful. Isn't that right, Aunt Margaret?" She had picked up her crop and gloves and stood in the doorway with an air of controlled excitement which Mrs. Brand found far from reassuring. "I hear his horses coming up the avenue now. Good-by, aunt."

"Don't go far, Edith," Mrs. Brand called after her, "see what a heavy fog has come up."

Shivering, the girl walked soberly downstairs, with a feeling that every difficulty of a lifetime was crowded into the next half hour. The stairs were not long, but before she reached the bottom a conviction had forced itself upon her. Now she realized that it had been there, in the back of her head, full grown and ready, from the second she had learned about Julian. At the foot of the steps she paused, one gloved hand on the carved newel-post. Jane held the door open. Wet, chill waves of fog drifted in. From without came the sound of horses impatiently stamping, a faint clank of curb-chains, and the groom's voice steady, soothing.

Jane looked towards her questioningly, and still she paused, mechan-

ically drawing her fingers over the beading of the newel-post. It took a little time, a few seconds at least, for that decision,—to be active where a girl should be passive, to offer that which should be humbly sought,—but the generosity, the hidden tenderness of Edith's nature, bled for what she had done. She knew no half measures. She had insulted him grossly, beyond apology, beyond reparation, except one.

Trembling, with head erect and eyes full of exaltation, she swept to the door, leaving far behind her world, her life, traditions even she had never questioned.

V.

NEITHER GABARDINES, FEATHERS, NOR BLACK SKINS

UPSTAIRS Mrs. Brand and Miss Parrish sat over their teacups. These cups contained hot water, Mrs. Brand's loyalty to fashion extending even to modish hygiene.

"How sweet Edith is looking," ventured Miss Parrish, who had not given all that information without hope of some slight return.

"I wish to Heaven she were safely married!" Mrs. Brand was no believer in mincing matters.

Constitutionally incapable of calling a spade a spade, Miss Parrish found pleasurable excitement in Mrs. Brand's round way of stating things. Looking like an expectant rabbit, she now asked, "What hurry is there, Cousin Margaret? Surely she is young enough to take her time."

"She is very, very hard to manage," Mrs. Brand was fairly bitter, "and I wish this young Meldöhla, or whatever he calls himself, were well out of the way. He may give me a great deal of trouble yet. I don't mean her to marry him, and the slightest opposition would be just enough to make her want to do it. She is so perverse. Why, I hear her coming upstairs again! Edith! Edith!"

Edith came slowly to the door. A thick veil completely hid her face. "I am not going to ride after all," she said; "Mr. Meldöhla was prevented at the last minute. His man brought a note." The envelope she held out looked rather like a letter. "And it's too dismal riding alone in this fog. I think I'll take a comfortable nap instead."

When the older ladies were again alone, Mrs. Brand went on in a voice tense with speculation. "Now I do wonder what has happened. I trust they may have quarrelled. But if they make up I've thought of something to do, though it will be a great bore."

The rabbit's nose positively twitched with edification. "What do you mean, Cousin Margaret?"

Mrs. Brand declaimed her intentions with a nobly sacrificial air. "I'm told, Mary, though naturally I've never been near such places, that certain hotels in the Catskills and at Long Branch are entirely patronized by people with awful names, like Lemmlein, Blumberger,

Aaronson, and the like. I don't suppose they would refuse rooms to us. Now if this affair of Edith's goes on, I shall have rheumatism. The climate of Maine is very damp. The doctor is sure to order a change of air. We will go to one of those hotels. With all her nonsense, at bottom Edith is extremely fastidious, and when she's once seen them at their worst, I think she will hardly care about involving herself in any such milieu. All the same, I should like to have a look at that note."

Once in her own room, Edith laid the unopened letter on her toilet-table; then, dropping her riding-clothes, she pulled on a fluffy dressing-gown and threw herself on the lounge. The untidy pile of garments annoyed her. Slowly she arose, picked them up, and flung them out of the door, and came back to the toilet-table. There lay the envelope with unbroken seal. Well, it had to be done sooner or later. There were several pages; the writing spoke of haste; here a word was scratched, here a blot. She read:

"Of course, it's my fault, not having told you. Truly, I didn't remember. You made me forget all about Jews and Gentiles; you and I were the same, with no break of blood or race between us. It's all my stupidity. Please understand this. I'm not blaming you, but myself. If you had known, if you'd had a suspicion, you would never have spoken. I see now, my silence misled you. When those people began, as you said, to sputter over Dreyfus, it seemed so opera-bouffe that I couldn't bring myself to speak. Just because it means so much to every living Jew, I couldn't parade the sorrows of Israel at a lunch-party, to titillate the emotions of a lot of hysterical women.

"Of course, you don't really mean what you said, but it's better you said it, because under a mere epigram, a bit of flippancy, lies a sentiment, an antipathy. We, you and I, are aliens. There's a barrier that's better respected; and to save our own feelings, we Jews should be the first to proclaim it, seeing that we are sometimes indistinguishable, having neither gabardines, feathers, nor black skins to identify us as inferior animals. Forgive me that gibe, dear. You know there's more than injured self-love in this. If that were all, I could laugh easily enough, but you were to be my wife. I never had another thought from the moment I saw you. You might say yes, you might say no, but sooner or later it had to be. I'd forgotten that you had been bred with certain feelings, born with certain instincts, and what would life be if these were always between us?

"In my body I've felt the conflict of those who suffer with the sympathies of two races. No man should put this struggle between him and his wife, transmit it to his children. I'd forgotten, God forgive me! forgotten everything but you, and if I saw you I'd forget again. If this is rough, if it's brutal, please forgive me; but you must remember that we

were to ride to-day, we were to ride out to that long headland where the sea beats against jagged rocks, and the air is full of brine and passion, dear, passion of life."

Edith's eyes closed a minute. She thrilled with pain, pain full of sweetness. This could be mended, since still he didn't hate her. Oh, she would be gentle, she would find ways to reach him. There came to her a vision of what might have been, the headland and their horses close together. Now it must be different. Their happiness must be sober; she had left no room for gayety. There could be no fencing, no dallying. Turning the page she read:

"But that would have been the real tragedy, to be pledged to each other, and then a chance word, an unconscious revelation. No! It's better so. This is good-by. To see you would be the worst hurt of all. In honor to my race I couldn't marry you now, dear, not if you asked me."

So that was the end! Edith sat dumbly miserable. The whole scheme of her existence made no allowance for such feelings as now tormented her. It was a fresh pain and humiliation that, in spite of his closing words, she wanted to see Julian as badly as ever. His presence had seemed to shut out the loneliness of life; he understood! Oh, what right had he to read her like that, to divine what she had planned in a moment of impulse. Well, at least they were quits. Out of intolerable discomfort and unhappiness she fell back on anger. He made too little allowance. To call that caring and be ready to leave her so without a chance of explaining. "I couldn't marry you now, not if you asked me!" Why, he might just as well have struck her. No woman could be unhappy about a person who said such things. She would forget him at once, if she had to accept the next man who asked her. Marriage! Yes, that was evidently the solution of her difficulties. It was not for nothing that Edith had browsed at large on a varied range of reading, philosophic and pseudo-scientific, and she made a diagnosis of her own state as a psychological condition calling for stringent measures. In violent reaction against anything like romantic feeling she decreed that her inclination for Julian had been only a manifestation of weariness with her present mode of life. Men she acknowledged to be tiresome or obnoxious creatures, but since marrying one of them was the only escape from some forms of ennui, she mustn't grudge the price. As for liking one better than another, no intelligent woman should be guilty of such folly.

The longer she thought it over, the more unbearable Julian's letter appeared, and the more plainly it behooved her to let him see his mistake in daring to imagine that she cared for him. It took her some time to arrive at this point, and the maid coming to dress her for dinner found her still restlessly pacing to and fro.

"What gown, Mademoiselle?"

"The green one, the good green one; and, Annette, be careful about my hair. I want to look nice to-night."

Annette inspected her mistress in much surprise. As a rule, Edith took her own looks as a matter of course, paying little heed to the coils of soft, gold hair which fell in so harmoniously with the lines of her small, shapely head. The green frock was a marvellous, cobwebby thing, intricate, light as foam, a wonderful setting for Edith's delicate slimness. To-night, instead of her usual clear pallor, the girl showed a bright pink spot in either cheek. Her dilated pupils shone black under their dark lashes, giving her an air of almost artificial brilliancy.

"Mercy, child! Whom are you expecting?" Mrs. Brand asked as the girl swept into the drawing-room.

"Expecting? No one." Edith's voice was crisp and self-possessed. "It's Mrs. Stuart's dinner, and I thought I might as well wear this dress as keep it in a box all summer. I've not an idea who's to be there."

"I heard this morning," Mrs. Brand threw out casually, "that Miles Barrington was stopping at the Stuarts'."

"Miles Barrington! Oh, he's the man who has done something in South America, isn't he? He went away before I came out. Do you know what he's like?"

"He made an immense fortune in gold-mines," said Mrs. Brand impressively, but seeing the look of interest die out of Edith's face, she added, "He is extremely handsome and most adventurous. He's done all sorts of wild things, been in revolutions, made dangerous trips through the interior without another white man."

"Dear me," Edith took the bait, "wouldn't it be luck if I were put next him at table?"

Although the faithful Mr. Tottinghame took her in to dinner, one glance assured Edith that her other neighbor could be no other than the venturesome Mr. Barrington. Of good middle height, broad-shouldered, narrow-flanked, strong but supple in his least movement, this black-haired, black-eyed man breathed at once an atmosphere of the world, of clubs, of courts even, and, above all, of wild, lawless existence. His dark mustache, with pointed ends turned upward, showed a gleam of solid, white teeth. His square, smooth-shaven chin was slightly cleft; the whole face was vivid, sunburnt, and ruddy, dangerously handsome now, with too clear a promise of greater floridness in days to come. Edith could only see this in part, as close inspection was made impossible by the open admiration expressed in the bold eyes which blazed from under his upturned, curling lashes.

Compared with him, Mr. Tottinghame's refined, decorous good looks

were flavorless as skimmed milk. He seemed more than ever a safe kind of maidenly person. She even doubted if he really were a lover, so discreet, measured, and unaggressive were his advances. After a few words with him Edith allowed her eyes to stray towards the stranger, and then he spoke.

"Since no one has introduced me, and as we are likely to be neighbors for the next two hours, may I present myself? My name is Miles Barrington."

Edith smiled acknowledgment and turned her dinner-card for him to read.

"Miss Linton. Of course I've heard of you. Indeed," he went on in a mellow voice with much volume in reserve, "I must confess to having seen your photograph in the drawing-room, and stipulated that Mrs. Stuart should put me next you. The photograph——"

"Miss Linton!" Mr. Tottinghame, having after due consideration decided to press his suit, was of no mind to let Edith be pirated away from him all through the dinner by a showy brute who probably didn't know *pâte dure* from *cloisonné*. "Miss Linton, do look at the color of these plates. Did you ever see anything more enchanting?"

"They look rather queer to me, unbaked," put in Mr. Barrington, shamelessly thrusting himself into the conversation, "but then I'm such an ignorant savage I've no doubt you could teach me a lot about—shades—Miss Linton. China is Greek to me," his eyes gave Edith a twinge of discomfort, "though there are some things I can judge of as well as the next person."

The girl's radiant beauty would have roused him without the prick of another man's evident annoyance, and his efforts to monopolize her were so insistent that Mr. Tottinghame wisely withdrew from the lists, merely saying to Edith in a mysterious whisper, "I've something to show you after dinner. There is no mistake about this, something wonderful!"

By the time the men were left to their cigars, Edith and Miles Barrington had gone so far afield that, tired with the pace, the girl slipped away from the drawing-room and wandered by herself to a small, sheltered garden dimly lighted from the veranda by a fantastic Chinese lamp.

The fog had lifted. Shut in on three sides by an impenetrable hedge, the garden was still and warm. The pungent fragrance of clipped box edges gave point to the caressing sweetness of roses and mignonette. The place seemed infinitely peaceful and remote. Sinking down on a bench the girl assured herself that the evening had been delightful, proving that her whim for Julian was the merest short-lived fancy. His charm had lain simply in novelty, a certain spice which was notably lacking in the other men she knew. Now Mr. Bar-

rington's company was much spicier, consequently more interesting. He had done things. While Julian was poring over law-books, the other man had gone up and down the world, had fought, had seen life at its wildest. Oh, what stories he must have! She had been foolish to let him talk so much of her at dinner. When she saw him again he should tell tales to beggar Othello's. She would have a glimpse of the unknown outer world where things really happened.

"Io non ti di-co, vieni al ve-ro-ni——"

The mellowest of tenor voices caught her ear, and in the dim light she saw the broad shoulders of Miles Barrington leisurely approaching.

"Why throw away your cigarette?" she asked, as he stopped immediately in front of her.

"Because it's unlucky to be too happy, but if you really don't mind——" pulling out paper and tobacco, he rolled a cigarette with practised hand. As he lighted it Edith had a chance to study his face, sharply illumined by the flaring match. He was flushed, a little more dangerous looking than she liked, but her impulse to go back to the house was checked by the recollection of Mr. Tottinghame waiting with "something wonderful" to show her.

"How do you happen to know Italian?" she asked to break the silence. "Isn't Spanish what you use in South America?"

"Dago workmen," he answered uninterestedly, going on in quite another manner, "isn't there room for two on that bench?"

The bench was a substantial affair with room for half a dozen, but to Edith's extreme annoyance he took his place near her, quite unnecessarily near, leaning a bent elbow on the back of the seat till his arm almost touched her shoulder.

"You blessed little girl!" Without the slightest warning he suddenly moved even nearer, lying a hot hand on hers. Edith made a motion to rise, but felt herself forcibly held down. Furiously as she resented his detaining grasp, in a second she realized that struggle or remonstrance would only bring about worse trouble because—she knew it now, blind, idiotic as she had been till this minute—the man had been drinking. He was not physically from under his own control, there was no uncertainty of speech or motion, only the ordinary restraints of life had lost hold and resistance would be met by force.

Foolish and imprudent enough, Edith was far from stupid or cowardly. "Do you know," she governed her voice to speak indifferently, "if we are going to sit here any longer, I shall have to ask you a favor. Will you get me a wrap? There's a little shawl lying on the hall table, a white one with silver stripes. The dew has begun to fall and I want something over my hair. You don't mind?"

It cost her much not to pour out scorn and anger, but the man was irresponsible, capable of violence; she must get rid of him, leaving punishment till the morrow—then——

"Mind! Don't you think I'd do more than that for you?" Releasing her, he made a few steps along the path, then turned back, and with a sudden and irresistible movement, stooping down, pressed his burning lips to her white shoulder, and walked swiftly towards the house.

If there had been a knife in Edith's hand at that minute, Miles Barrington would have felt it between his shoulder-blades. Her sick rage was all the more unbearable that in the back of her consciousness lurked the suspicion that she had in a measure earned this loathsome mishap. Feeling defiled, savagely anxious for vengeance, she could only hide tamely.

The garden hedge was impenetrable. To escape she must wait in a deep angle of the veranda and slip in the window after Mr. Barrington came out again while he was walking down the path to the bench. Accomplishing this successfully, leaving him to hunt for her in the garden, trembling with anger and physical disgust, in gaining the shelter of the house she almost ran into Mr. Oscar Tottinghame.

"Do come here, Miss Linton." The young man was pleading, but not eager. Edith scanned him with an odd expression. He wore the unmistakable look of a man about to propose.

"Come this way, please, into Mrs. Stuart's morning-room. There's a good lamp there."

He led the way; she followed, meditating. Why not marry him? He was eminently unobjectionable, cool, unmanlike! She seemed to be making a great mess of spinsterhood. Could marriage be had on easier terms? She did not believe he would be exacting. He would look on her as just another piece of bric-à-brac for his collection. It would save a lot of trouble.

They were sitting on a divan, side by side, most decorously. From his pocket he drew out a curiously stamped case of soft leather.

"Miss Linton," his voice was agreeably formal, "when I saw you in this green gown to-night, a gown like a poem, I felt—perhaps you think such ideas childish? but I really felt it was a favorable omen."

Very serious, Edith listened with a face devoid of expression. If she announced her engagement to-morrow, not one, not Julian himself, would ever suspect that she had cared. Mr. Tottinghame shook something out of the case, a flexible coil of gold from which hung a dull green pendant.

"Look at this, Miss Linton." Politely avoiding all contact of fingers, he laid it on her open palm. "It's an ancient Hindoo carving, very rare, an emerald—the head of the monkey god. Just examine the cutting."

She saw a wicked ape's face leering bestially out of small ruby eyes. "It's a wonderful piece of work." Her voice had a note of repulsion.

"Yes, and it has a history which seems really authentic. It was torn from the neck of the Monkey God, Hanuman, at the loot of Delhi. Beyond that its age is fabulous. There is nothing like it in the world. Indeed, I feel that it is even worthy to be worn by you."

Edith looked at the evil, sensuous monkey god.

"By you, Miss Linton."

No. A wholly impersonal courtship was not to her taste if it meant such detachment as would let a man consider that abomination a fitting love-token, a decoration to be worn by any girl. Then her pride gave way and inwardly she confessed. Why deny her love? It was broken, gone, never hers, but she would rather have cared for Julian once, unhappily, for a minute, than, content, pass through life without knowing him. It was all over and irrevocable, but he and he only was her mate. Since that might never be, she must needs stay true to herself and face life alone.

Seeing her air of abstraction, Mr. Tottinghame paused.

"You are very good," she spoke not unkindly, but with emphasis, "to offer me—that god. It's a gift of priceless value; but nothing would induce me to accept it—to-night—or ever. And now I must find Mrs. Stuart. It's time to go home."

VI.

MR. JOSEPHS

In the course of the next few weeks Edith learned that there may be worse conditions than being bored with the general unsatisfactoriness of life. The one point in which her feeling never shifted was the imperative need for hiding her pain; consequently she entirely gave over grumbling at the dulness of things and accepted all invitations with an alacrity which made Mrs. Brand feel that her niece's period of storm and stress was happily over. Her anxiety was completely allayed, since to a practical mind Julian's abrupt departure was only susceptible of the most satisfactory explanation.

The climax was put to Edith's misery by the arch and knowing air with which her aunt, and some of the elder lady's cronies, occasionally alluded to the young man's evident mishap. No amount of disclaiming on her part would convince them that she had not purposely encouraged him the better to send him off in despair. Though Mrs. Brand had no wish that her niece should marry Julian Meldohla, she was fully alive to Edith's having gained a certain prestige by rejecting him.

In addition to being unhappy, the girl began to feel painfully inadequate; her self-condemnation had suffered, and loneliness weighed on her

like a creeping sickness. The aimless restlessness of her outer life was accompanied by a hopeless passivity of mind and spirit.

Julian was in far better plight. The solace of instant motion was not denied him. The first wave of anger and disappointment carried him far from the scene of his troubles, and prompt buckling down to hard work procured him the relief of genuine, overpowering fatigue, which for a time deadened him into acquiescence with the decrees of fate. Then one day, suddenly, his mainspring seemed to break. All the morning he had ploughed through masses of evidence, reports, blue books, finding no difficulty in forcing his mind to unravel the mysteries of a certain corporation which had lately appointed him its attorney.

Sitting over his lunch at a down-town club, all at once he was overcome by a most unusual feeling, distaste of life. He had always found the world interesting, full of zest, entirely worth the trouble of living, and it was no part of his programme that the caprices of one slim blonde girl, Jew or Gentile, should permanently disturb his equanimity. With characteristic grasp of circumstances he had decided to put the whole episode behind him, relying on professional ambition to tide him over the first keenness of disappointment.

To-day he blankly realized that doing without Edith was a very different state of mind from never having known her. Imagination, beaten down for a while by a furious bout of mental application, suddenly growing uncontrollable, tormented him with visions. A vision of Edith, here, leaning her elbows on the table and looking out at the panorama of the great city, stories and stories below; now viewing him with delicious intimacy, now shy and hard to coax into friendliness.

Leaving his luncheon untouched, Julian fled precipitately, with a vaguely formulated idea of riding, rowing, moving quickly in any direction to rid himself of his tantalizing obsession. The streets were odious with the unfresh air of autumn in a city. The exhausted atmosphere added to Julian's sense of resentment. As he stood on the sidewalk uninterestedly debating his next move, he was hailed out of a passing hansom, which quickly turned and drew up at the curbstone.

"You don't seem to be in a hurry, Julian. Suppose you come with me for a little while."

The speaker was a small, elderly man, with a face of much charm, also subtlety. Julian obeyed promptly, lighting up with pleasure as he said, "I didn't know you were in town yet, Mr. Josephs. How well you are looking," he added.

Mr. Josephs smiled affectionately. "I can't truly say the same for you. Aren't you a little pale and thin for a person who has had a long holiday?"

"My holiday was short." So was Julian's answer. "I have been in town a month or more."

Best of confidants, Mr. Josephs had almost fantastic respect for the reserves of younger people. Not pressing a point evidently sore, he asked, "Would you have time this afternoon, I wonder, for an act of pure graciousness?"

"All day and all night, if it means being with you." Julian was grateful at not being tempted to confidences.

Mr. Josephs drew from his pocket a pair of new black kid gloves and began to put them on. The delicacy of his hands corresponded with the fineness and strength of his pale, well-modelled face, the mouth a little scornful in repose, but changing into illuminating sweetness when he smiled. There was a certain quiet exquisiteness in his dress which spoke of standards of perfection touching every detail in life. His voice was so gentle as to sound almost deprecating, but in spite of its extreme softness, his clear-cut consonants forbade all idea of inefficiency.

"Will you come to a funeral?" he asked. "It's a good, orthodox funeral, but there may be very few of the family in town, and I'm afraid we may have to call in one of the undertaker's men to make up a Minyan."

"Of course I'll come." A funeral exactly chimed in with Julian's mood. "But who is it,—none of your people, I hope?"

"No." Mr. Josephs was reverent, not sad. "I hardly knew the man except in a business way. He used to come to the bank occasionally to talk over investments, and now he's made me executor. He was a solitary old creature, lived with a married niece, I think. I really know nothing of his relations but that they are well-to-do people named Aaronson."

The cab drew up at a comfortable-looking house with decorously bowed windows and streaming crape on the doorknob. A few small girls carrying large babies hovered expectantly about the brownstone steps till a cross functionary scattered them to a distance, whence they patiently awaited the coming spectacle.

Indoors all superfluous furniture had been scrupulously stowed away; not a mirror was unveiled, not an ormolu table or art drapery remained to fill the eye with undue cheerfulness. The narrow hall, the ample sitting-room, and dismal parlor overflowed with black-clad, serious mourners. They passed slowly up to the coffin, looked for a moment on the peaceful face of an old, old man, then quietly found seats in obscure corners. In a back room the women wept with demonstrative, kindly grief. Young men circling about as ushers showed eyes genuinely tearful, yet they were only mourning a great-uncle, and such a very ancient man that nothing but a sense of the innate sacredness of human life and the deepest respect for family ties could have made this a time of unaffected sorrow.

"There seem to be plenty of men, if you want to slip out," whispered Mr. Josephs to Julian.

"Thanks, I'd rather stay," Julian answered. He felt the desire to freshen himself in bonds of race and blood, to heat an enthusiasm the cost of which he was beginning to find somewhat heavy. "Please, sir," he added, "manage that we shall be in the same carriage. I've something to tell you." The wish to unburthen himself had come with overwhelming force. The rooms grew full. The black-coated Chazan put on a tall silk hat of archaic outlines, contrasting oddly with the young men's correct headgear. There was a moment's hush, then, beautiful to the ear, uplifting to the spirit, the reader's voice poured out the incomparable, sonorous Hebrew phrases of the burial-service. The other men gave responses, full and rhythmic. From the room beyond came audible sounds of weeping.

The rites concluded, the carriages drove away, the little crowd outside dispersed, and no further duty remained for his kindred to show old Jonas Aaronson but to read and carry out his will. Concerning this will three of the family were talking as they drove back to town from the cemetery, an older man and comfortably rotund, and his sons, two brisk young fellows of undeniable middle class, with a manner of speech several degrees more civilized than their highly commercial appearance.

The father was saying, "Yes, poor old Uncle Jonas! He had a lonely life of it, not marrying. Even a man's money hardly seems his own if he leave no children to inherit it."

"Is it true," asked one of the young men, "that he was in love with a Christian?"

"Yes. I've always heard of a lovely girl that he was set on marrying till he found it would break his mother's heart; so he gave her up. But from that time, they say, he never looked upon a woman."

The sons exchanged glances, and one of them commented, "They were better in those days than we are, father. I don't think the Christian girls can hold a candle to ours. They haven't the looks or the style, and they aren't half such women, but if I did fancy one, I'm afraid the family traditions would have to take a back seat."

His father poked him jocosely. "As if we didn't all know where you spend every evening, Sammy! Unless Rachel turns you down, my son, your story is told." He continued in a minor key suited to the recounting of mournful family legends, "Only one of the whole connection married away from our own people, and that was my sister, your poor Aunt Florence."

"Whew! I never knew that!" Rachel's young man spoke with much interest. "Tell us about it."

"There's not a great deal to tell. It was long ago, when she was

young, beautiful, and had considerable property. After our parents' death she went abroad. On the steamer she met and took up with a worthless snob of a man, dead broke, lazy, but a member of an aristocratic old Knickerbocker family. It all happened on the other side, and as soon as the courting and marriage were over, he showed he was mighty ashamed of her people—of her too, I've no doubt, if we knew the truth. We would have forgiven the marriage, though we didn't care for it, but no one could stand being treated as so much dirt, and he did that in the very letters he was keen enough in writing about her money. Poor girl! She died soon and left that man sole guardian of the baby. Then the control of her cash passed out of our hands, and all connection between us and him ceased. I can't even think if the child was a boy or a girl."

"Funny, isn't it?" said the quieter of the young men. "We may have a relation going the pace in the very front of the New York Four Hundred! By the way, wasn't great-grandfather's will fixed so that if any of his children die without issue, their share goes back into the family? If that's so, this precious cousin comes in for a slice of old Uncle Jonas's estate."

"That's true," said his father. "I'd clean forgotten it, though, of course, it would have to come out reading the will. Seems rather a gouge, but it can't be helped. If the child's alive, the money belongs to it fast enough. If it's dead, those people aren't entitled to a cent, and they're such a money-sucking set of leeches they'll be sure to give us some trouble."

Rachel's young man revolved this problem in his mind for a minute, then happily offered a solution. "Don't send the regular legal notices off till you've consulted Mr. Josephs. Maybe, if he doesn't know already, he would find out about them on the quiet. He always hears everything. If the child isn't alive, there's no occasion to notify anyone."

"Right you are, Sammy, for once," said his father approvingly. "Mr. Josephs is just the man to do the right thing in the right way."

In another carriage Julian and Mr. Josephs spoke of the beauty of the service, the richness of the ritual. Their talk flickered and went out. After a pause, the elder man asked, "Did you say there was something——"

"Yes, a girl!" Julian blurted out, as if impatient of pain.

"My dear boy, do you mean—— But in this short time how could you reach that point?" Mr. Josephs spoke with gentle raillery, inviting but not forcing confidence.

"Pshaw! I can't talk about it. I never stopped to think."

At this confession Mr. Josephs raised his eyebrows. Julian was seldom thoughtless.

"Seeing her and living seemed the same thing," the young man went on hotly. "It wasn't often we met, just a few times, but it was too much for me."

"And the lady?" Mr. Josephs asked.

"Oh! She! She liked me well enough, but—she's a carefully bred anti-Semite. She says the faces on Fifth Avenue of an afternoon would convince anyone that Dreyfus is guilty."

"Nice girl," commented Mr. Josephs, "how gracefully she put your dismissal."

Julian cut in eagerly. "Oh, she isn't like that. She hadn't an idea of my being a Jew. Somehow I never thought of telling her."

Mr. Josephs's face showed deep concern; to forget this Julian must have been carried far beyond his habitual state of masterful consciousness.

The young man went on as if he were arguing Edith's cause. "She had never seen any of our kind, only the worst. It is as if you had to judge the English by the mob who swarm the trains and parks of a bank holiday. It is just another instance of what I'm always talking about. We show the world our unattractive side, and then feel hurt at being undervalued and misjudged. Our visible representatives are shoestring fakirs and incredible stock jobbers, while you and your like compass yourselves about with triple plate and hide from Christian eyes."

Mr. Josephs had listened intently. "Quite true, Julian, but don't such buffets as you are now tingling from rather bar the way to easy social intercourse? The feeling crops out in so many ways. For my part, I can hardly tell which is the more impertinent, such gross intentional insults as being asked to remove my contaminating presence from a summer hotel, or the politeness of people who consider it the most delicate flattery to explain that they would never have known me for a Jew."

Too full of Edith to think consecutively on any other subject, Julian did not pursue this argument, but went on meditatively. "The funny part of it all is that at first I spotted her as one of us. You know, sir, we always think we can't be mistaken in that."

"Yes," said Mr. Josephs, "I've never yet found myself wrong."

"You know"—Julian's voice was a study in hot crescendos and enforced coolness—"you sometimes see a strange blonde type, very beautiful, spirited, with pale gold hair, long, wide-apart hazel eyes—but no one ever really looked like her. She has a kind of fallen angel look, a good angel in the wrong place. I suppose," he added, pulling himself up and speaking in a calmly judicial tone, "that the attraction was really personal, not racial."

He gave a short laugh. "Anyhow, I'm pledged to forget her. This

is my plan. I'll just work like a beaver at the railroad case that is to come up in November, and by the time our side has won you'll find me as good as new."

"It is a bad thing for a man not to marry young," observed Mr. Josephs.

Julian looked a little rueful. "Don't you worry about that," he said. "Some day I'll find relaxed old bachelor ways gaining on me, putting my own fork in the dish when I'm dining alone, and such nasty tricks. By that time one of your little nieces will have grown a tall, beautiful, dark-haired young lady. Then she and I will stand together under the chuppah and drink the wine and break the glass—and rear our children in the love of Israel."

VII.

"KOL-NI-DRY"

MEANWHILE Edith continued to drift quite without purpose till the life-and-death illness of a front tooth brought Mrs. Brand back to New York a full month earlier than usual. After objecting on general principles to her niece's accompanying her, she ended by consenting, having at bottom some misgivings as to the girl's ability to keep the pace she had set herself. Edith never complained of being tired, but she certainly had grown thinner and paler during the past weeks.

"I'm afraid you find it very dull, Edith, dear," she remarked sympathetically one morning after breakfast. "Town seems perfectly empty. What are you going to do with yourself to-day?"

This very problem had been perplexing Edith through the watches of a restless night. To-day, to-morrow, this year and next, hung over her like a pall. Life, never too alluring, had suddenly become an aching burden. At best she had found it difficult, and now there was a strange sense of being crippled, of having lost a member. Adjustment would doubtless take place in time; meanwhile she was winged and helpless. The humiliation of this aroused her anger till existence became a wearisome vibration between two painful states of feeling.

"Why don't you drop in at Aline's?" Mrs. Brand suggested cheerfully. "She sent me a note to say her new French things would be unpacked to-day. You might pick up something to wear at Alice Wyndham's wedding."

"An old dress is plenty good enough for a town wedding at this time of year; besides, I'm not going to buy any clothes this winter." A full-blown resolve had suddenly been borne to Edith. "I'm perfectly sick of going out. Slumming sounds much more amusing."

Mrs. Brand's opposition quivered in the balance and vanished. In the early days of this fashionable pursuit she had been one of its fiercest opponents, but, always ready to learn by experience, she had since observed that after an enthusiastic revel in democracy, girls

were apt to emerge with a new relish for every natural avocation, from women's lunches to matrimony.

"I've no doubt you will find it very interesting," she said, much to Edith's astonishment. The girl was in a mood to fight for her rights, and having them granted without remonstrance left her feeling oddly baffled.

"I'm going for a walk on the East Side this morning." Edith's ideas of how to begin her new career could not have been vaguer.

"Very well, only don't tire yourself." It cost Mrs. Brand much effort not to end this nonsense with a downright prohibition, but up to a certain point her self-control was flawless. "And if you chance on any good old brass," she went on, "you might get me a seven-branch candlestick. I'm told the Russians down there often have very nice ones."

The day was raw, verging on rain. The pavements, slippery with greasy mud, were thronged with people busy with their own affairs. Totally unaccustomed to such neighborhoods, Edith at first expected to be annoyed, even molested, and picked her way along braced for adventure. After walking many blocks without attracting visible notice, she ventured to look more freely about her at the small, dark shops with goods overflowing the sidewalks. She felt amusement at marvellous reproductions of smart Sixth Avenue ready-made clothes, very stylish, very showy; at grimy little provision-shops through whose cavernous doors came gusty waves of smell. She stopped to inspect windows full of fetid-looking cheeses, long strips of repellent sausages brightened with festoons of pepper and onions. Here an "Orlogeria" displayed large, cheap American watches against a background of the most amazing literature,—"*Il Divina Commedia*," "*Boccaccio*," "*Il Soppressio del Matrimonia*," "*Promessi Sposi*," "*Zaza*." At every step the children grew thicker. Down a cellar-way she caught a glimpse of a goat comfortably ensconced on a large, gayly accoutred bed. From a black passage between two tenements came something unparalleled, a pleasant odor. Glancing in, she saw lines and lines of golden drapery, new-made spaghetti drying in that germ-laden air. An accordion was playing "*Funiculi Funicula*;" some very small children began to dance. Edith suddenly made a discovery. This was gay! Here was life; here was meaning and intensity!

"Oh, the nice baby!" she involuntarily exclaimed, looking down on a young, brown mother, who from a low doorstep surveyed the passers-by, baring her full breast to the baby's eager lips. The mother smiled in gratification, and, bending over, kissed the dirty little fist, which gave a proprietary clutch at her bosom. Signs were no longer readable; Hebrew characters prevailed. Some were evidently theatrical posters, unflattered pictures of grotesque-featured men and women

in heterogeneous costumes. She passed unspeakably filthy eating-houses, and at first viewed only with repulsion child-encompassed groups of black-wigged women clustering about dirty doorways. Then her vision broadened. These were contented neighbors exchanging friendly talk. In that seething mob of children, each mother knew her own; there was family joy, zest, happiness. Her cold heart gained a sense of warmth, and she forgot the dirt, the smells, the rags, and lurking poverty in the vitality and naturalness of this teeming life.

One tiny restaurant attracted her by its comparative cleanliness. Gazing in the window stood a pinched, unhealthy mite of a girl, carrying a huge bundle of unsewed cloth garments. The child's wistful eyes were riveted on a murderous-looking pie. Through her ragged chintz frock blue, skinny arms spoke of perpetual short rations. Edith laid a finger on her sharp shoulder, and was horrified to see her jump back, throwing up a hand to protect her face. Ugly, suspicious, and thoroughly sordid looking, she stood pitifully afraid, and unable from the size of her bundle to make quickly for shelter.

"Don't be frightened; don't run off; it's all right." Edith's smile was so reassuring that the child's tense attitude relaxed. "Are you hungry?" she asked.

"Hungry?" queried the child doubtfully.

"Jah. Komm herein. Ich will dir etwas gutes kaufen." Edith pointed invitingly into the restaurant.

Half understanding, half believing, with backward glances at the door, the child followed into a decently neat room, where a few rough people were eating at small, bare tables. Edith's conscience forbade her giving that poisonous pie to a hungry child, so after stealing a glance at the dinners in process of consumption, she ordered the least unappetizing item on the bill of fare.

Finally reassured, her protégée sat in dazed expectation, while a much edified boy called through a hole in the wall, "One ham and eggs with fried potatoes."

In a minute he set the sizzling plate before Edith's guest, and then, quite suddenly, the world seemed to come to an end. Springing passionately to her feet, fear and shyness vanquished by an unexplained burst of fury, the child seized the plate, flung it violently to the floor, and with a bitter look of hate shook her bony fist in Edith's face, fairly hissing out, "A mesa mashinne!" and forgetting her precious bundle, darted towards the door, only to be roughly collared and brought back by the angry proprietor.

"Broke my good plate, the — Jew girl!"

The other guests began to talk excitedly.

"Serve the lady right. Give the poor kid ham and eggs——"

"That's a trick to play on a hungry child——"

"Better give good food to them knows how to act civil——"

For the second time in her life Edith was really frightened, and to make things worse, a policeman with the manner of an angry czar appeared in the doorway, delivered a ukase that the child was probably a dynamiter, and announced his intention of "running in" the whole "outfit."

"Good-morning, Officer. What's going on?"

A very plainly dressed woman, unmistakably a lady, stopped at the door, in no way daunted by the policeman's mien as he utilized his immense bulk to keep out the rapidly increasing crowd and pen in the unhappy patrons of the restaurant.

Raising one arm, he allowed the stranger to pass under it into the room. "Blessed if I know, Miss Brown. See what you can make of it," he said, adding with an air of aggressive virtue, "I don't care about flash-looking women fooling around with these little girls as nobody sees after."

Not in the least understanding, Edith made a step towards the lady, whose sharp look of scrutiny was almost as repellent as a blow.

"Very true, Officer," Miss Brown answered cordially, "but I think this is all right." Going over to Edith, she laid a friendly hand on her shoulder, "You poor child, how did you ever get in such a scrape?"

At once everyone in the room broke forth afresh in explanations, but the officer growled out, "Quiet there! Let the lady speak!"

"It's too ridiculous," said Edith. "I can hardly explain what happened. I asked that little girl to come in and have some lunch. When the plate was set before her——"

The crowd here showed signs of joining in, but subsided at a shake of the policeman's billy.

"She flung it down on the floor and called me—bad names. There it is still. She broke that heavy plate. Then there was a terrible uproar, and you, policeman,"—Edith was unaware that for guilty strangers the vocative of that noun is officer,—"you thought we were all nihilists. I feel," she added, turning to her deliverer, "that everybody has suddenly gone mad."

"Now you see"—Miss Brown addressed the autocrat in propitiating tones—"it was just a little misunderstanding. The lady will pay for your plate, Mr. Callahan, and here is ten cents for the child to get a pie. Suppose you come home to lunch with me at the Settlement," she said to Edith, as they left the restaurant simmering down to merely normal activity.

"Apparently," said Edith, with a frank smile at her own expense, "it takes a special education even to ask an acquaintance to dinner. Are you going to be good enough to explain my blunders?"

Miss Brown looked at her a little wistfully. "First let me tell you one thing, Miss—Miss——"

"Oh, I beg your pardon. My name is Linton, Edith Linton."

"My dear child," Miss Brown went on, "the truth is you are far too young and, excuse my saying it, too pretty and gayly dressed to roam about indiscriminately."

"These clothes, yes, they are rather light, but I could get a dark suit like yours," Edith was pleading.

"Yes, but how about—— I'm afraid your face will give some trouble for many a year to come. You see, down here ornamental-looking people are apt to be misunderstood."

Edith thought this over for a minute. "I see. So that's what the policeman meant. It's a little hard," she spoke sadly, "not to be wanted anywhere." Miss Brown saw her face harden as she added politely but from a great distance, "I'm not thanking you for a most timely rescue. Without your help I was in for serious trouble. What a vixen that little wretch was, and she looked so down-trodden."

"Do you know," Miss Brown spoke slowly, "that child's outbreak was just a bit of the wonderful quality which has made and marred the Jewish race."

"I don't see?" Edith asked.

"She was starved, cowardly, yet when you set before her forbidden food, pig——"

"Oh! Oh!" Edith exclaimed.

"Of course," said Miss Brown, "you didn't realize, but she thought you meant to tempt or mock her."

"I see, I see." Quick tears sprang to Edith's eyes. "And she forgot she was hungry, she forgot she was afraid."

"I'm a Unitarian myself and very liberal," Miss Brown spoke in the most matter-of-fact way, well aware that Edith's emotion threatened to become painfully manifest, "and often working among these strict Eastern Jews, their narrowness and obstinacy exasperates me almost past endurance. Then you come to something like this, some proof of the sacrifice they are always ready to make for a belief, for an idea."

"Miss Brown," Edith could hardly speak distinctly, "I must go home now, but may I come back some day soon, and will you tell me more about these people, this race?"

"I wonder"—Miss Brown hesitated—"how it would strike you? They give a very interesting play to-night at the Yiddish theatre. Here's my card. Be at the house at eight, and, Miss Linton," she smiled mischievously, "come in a cab and don't wear new white gloves."

"What sort of an expedition is this? Hadn't you better take Annette along?" asked Mrs. Brand, whose self-control nearly reached its limit when Edith, in severely plain golf costume, rang for a cab and declared her intention of spending an evening at the College Settlement.

"Annette? No. A maid would only be in the way, and Miss Brown will put me in the cab coming home."

"Well, be sure you make a point of having the same driver come back for you. Have you any idea where this person is taking you?"

"She said to be at her house at eight o'clock." Edith felt a marked aversion to giving details. "I suppose it will be a great bore," she spoke indifferently, "but she was very polite, and I promised. She'll expect me."

"You could telephone," insisted Mrs. Brand.

"No, I promised." Edith had no mind to give up the evening's entertainment.

"So you really are here." Miss Brown's welcoming smile was full of cordiality. "I half expected this morning's experience might be enough for you."

"No. I am most anxious to see—— What is it, a play?"

They were emerging from an ill-lighted side-street into the main thoroughfare, bright with electric lamps and gas-jets flaring over fruit-stalls. Traffic was in full swing. Sturdy peasant women steered market baskets through a motley crowd, their right hands ever grasping shabby purses. At a pushcart little boys were buying clams and oysters. The merchant, aged twelve at most, deftly opened and sluiced a mollusk with fearsome-looking catsup, pocketed the customer's copper, and turned to the next with business-like haste. Having swallowed the luscious morsel, giving a comprehensive lick to both sides of the shell, one black-eyed imp nodded to Miss Brown with a friendly grin.

"Come to Eyetalian theayter to-night?"

"No, Toni, not to-night." Miss Brown's naturalness filled Edith with envy. "We are going to the Yiddish play this evening."

"Oh, that's no good!" Toni looked very cross. "That's a bum show, lousy!"

At this appalling statement Edith felt considerably taken aback, but her guide walked on composedly, merely observing, "The dagos feel rather jealous about the splendors of the Jewish theatre."

The small, shabby playhouse was nearly full when Miss Brown and Edith took their seats well to the front in good view of a brilliant drop-curtain.

"Do look at that," whispered Miss Brown. "It's the judgment of Solomon."

"But," asked Edith, "why are both babies alive? Am I mixed up about there being a dead one?"

"No, you are right, but the management is very sympathetic, and a dead baby would make a painful impression."

"There seem to be plenty of live ones in the audience," said Edith, greatly entertained, as family parties trooped in, grandmothers, very ancient, parents, grandchildren, and babies at the breast, with young couples evidently courting. All filed in and took their seats with the utmost amount of shifting, bustle over the disposition of refreshments, stowing away of soda-water bottles and pretzels, with instant consumption of sticky, liquefying candy.

The gallery began to whistle and a small orchestra, not too bad, struck up a lively rag-time tune. Miss Brown was talking with a girl on the next row, a girl with queer, elderly hands and immense, plumed headgear.

"This is a play of the olden times," the girl spoke with a strong accent, "when each one was not free to worship God in his own way, like we Americans. It is called 'Kol-Ni-Dry,' the name of a song we sing on the night before a great fast. Oh, it is a fine play with much good music."

The first scene was an ordinary stage village with the usual inn, church, and fountain. A group of Jewish-featured actors talked rapidly in a language which sounded like German and wasn't. The mediæval costumes looked like the offscourings of a dozen comic-opera choruses.

Suddenly a red-robed cardinal and suite passed through into the church, the group on the stage, decorously uncovered and crossing themselves, followed, all but one man and woman, evidently comic characters. These came to the front of the stage, and while chimes were ringing sank on their knees and, with unmistakable ironic intention, emphasized by confidential winks at the audience, sang an "Ave Maria."

The laughter and applause temporarily suspended the consumption of peanuts and oranges. Edith felt physically shocked. Anything but a religious or orthodox Christian, from association rather than conviction, she felt some reverence towards a faith in which she had been reared.

"Isn't it curious," whispered Miss Brown, "to see a world-wide joke inverted? Think of all the comic elements in Christian plays at the expense of Jews! This is really interesting," she went on. "I'm beginning to understand. These are the Marranos, the secret Jews in Spain. We'll have a touch of the Inquisition before long."

In the next act the audience grew very serious over the troubles of the Cardinal's daughter, who, with his wife, seemed to take part in every ecclesiastic function. Her lover, Bartello, chief singer to Ferdi-

nand and Isabella, who shortly made their entry, seemed filled with the gloomiest apprehensions, and passed all his love-scenes in singing melodies whose noble cadences raised the whole performance to an unexpected plane of emotion.

"Oh, but this is beautiful, it's solemn," Edith exclaimed. "Where have I heard that? It's familiar, though I can't place it."

"You've never heard it unless you've been to synagogue," said Miss Brown. "It is a religious chant. See what is coming now."

The curtain went up on the interior of a chapel with a priest celebrating the mass. Candles burnt under crucifixes, pictures of the Virgin and saints. Worshippers knelt, singing.

"Why, the priest is Bartello!" Edith felt a sense of growing excitement. The audience was absolutely still and intent.

At a sign from Bartello the church doors were bolted, and in a rapid transformation candles were extinguished, secret springs touched covering pictures and bringing out Hebrew tablets. Dropping his surplice, Bartello put on a cap and hung about his shoulders a white shawl. "It's a taleth," whispered Miss Brown. From a secret place he pulled out a great roll of parchment.

"The scroll of the Law," said the girl in front, breathless, as he began a song of a stateliness and pathos that thrilled through Edith's every fibre.

"'Kol-Ni-Dry,'" said the girl, "that which the chazan sings on the eve of Yom Kippur."

Suddenly the worshippers stopped in alarm at knocking on the church door. The music was quickly replaced by an "Ave Maria;" the scroll, the tablets, the taleth, vanished in a second; and the officers of the Holy Inquisition, the King, the Queen, the Cardinal, and the Cardinal's wife and daughter burst in on a quiet celebration of midnight mass. Then for thrilling minutes the chapel was searched for evidence till, just as the hunt was being abandoned, one villainous old secretary unearthed the scroll, and Bartello was seized and bound. Before they could carry him off, the Cardinal's daughter broke into a passionate invective, denouncing her father and the secretary as converts betraying their own people, proclaimed herself a Jewess, and was taken to prison with Bartello.

The play ended in one short scene of the two lovers burning at the stake, vainly groping for each other's hands, but to the very last triumphantly chanting "Kol-Ni-Dry."

"Well," said Miss Brown in a matter-of-fact voice, "that's better than an up-to-date vaudeville. A great many educated Jews condemn these plays as retrogressive, but Mr. Josephs says they are good, if it's only making the people appreciate their improved condition."

"Mr. Josephs? Who is he?" Edith asked.

"One of the trustees of the Hirsch Fund, but he's rich and does a great deal down here himself. He always makes me think of Sidonia in 'Coningsby;' not that he's a bit like him, except for a sense of power and cosmopolitanism. You ought to know him. He and his friend, Mr. Meldohla, both come to Settlement sometimes."

"Well," said Edith, "this is the very most interesting evening I've ever spent anywhere. I don't know how to thank you, but you mustn't think me very ungrateful if I'm a long time coming back again. My family——" she paused, choking over a flagrant untruth.

"They're quite right," said her companion kindly. "Wait a few years and then come. There will always be plenty to do."

"Now I wonder," thought Miss Brown, after putting Edith safely in her cab, "what is the matter with that poor child, if she's really unhappy or only idle and vaporish. There were times to-night when she looked as if her heart would break."

VIII.

WHETHER SHE WILL OR NO

WHATEVER Julian's daily troubles, lack of occupation could not justly be reckoned among them, but the evenings lay heavy on his hands. Eminently sane and cheerful, he was accustomed to look on life as a joyous possession, to be systematically divided between business and pleasure. The working part of his schedule ran on as usual, but pleasure had all at once become unattainable. His nearest approach to enjoyment was an occasional chat with Mr. Josephs, but even in this he found less active satisfaction than a mere sense of temporary palliation.

"Is the master at home to-night, Hannah?" he asked of a lively, wizened old woman who opened the door of Mr. Josephs's large, quiet house.

"Bless me, if it isn't Mr. Julian! Come in, sir. Yes, he's in the library," she said, adding as he came into the light, "Dear heart! what ails the boy? He's as thin as the seven lean kine."

"You don't want me to grow fat, do you, Hannah?" said the young man in kindly bantering.

"Fat! No fear. But I do want one thing, and that badly. When are you going to get married, Mr. Julian? Don't wait too long. Look at the master alone in his study. Every man wants a wife and family, Mr. Julian. You'll never know the full joy of life till you hold your own man child in your arms."

"Wait a little, Hannah. I've my eye on a nice girl, but she's not quite grown yet," he answered, laughing. "When the time comes, you'll have to help with the marriage-feast. There aren't many people left who know all the secrets of our good Jewish kitchens."

"Mr. Julian," the old woman was deeply in earnest, "only give me due warning, and you shall have the best Kosher wedding-breakfast ever eaten in New York."

Julian found Mr. Josephs in an ample library, mellow rich in lamp-light, the very atmosphere breathing of tempered luxury, scholarship, and the most chastened and fastidious taste. Ornaments were sparse, —a few old prints, a bit of choice Japanese lacquer, one or two good bronzes,—but the room was saved from barrenness by a multitude of books, books to read, collectors' treasures, pamphlets, catalogues, and little, worn volumes telling of daily use.

The two friends talked in a desultory fashion. Julian's part in the conversation gradually lessened. The older man told sadly of letters that day received from Germany, describing an outbreak of *Juden Hetze* in a remote Danubian village.

Julian hardly listened, but, with a pleasure that habit never tarnished, studied his companion's fine, worn face. Men there had been so coarse-fibred as to mistake Mr. Josephs's exquisite gentleness for timidity, his absence of vulgar eagerness for lack of fire and spirit. For these once in a while he might unsheath the piercing rapier of his irony. To-night only sympathy and sweetness looked from those wise, tired eyes.

Suddenly he amazed Julian with a question. "That girl? You still think of her?"

For the moment speechless, Julian left the fireside, taking a short turn about the room.

Mr. Josephs glanced at his face. "No need to speak, dear boy, I have my answer."

Pausing at the mantel-shelf, Julian selected a fresh cigar, neatly cut the end, and lighted it, giving a puff or two as if its drawing power were of dominant interest. Then, sitting tense and upright in a deep arm-chair, he spoke in a level voice deliberately purged of all expression.

"Thank you. I'd rather speak just once more. The situation is this. After these weeks it's perfectly plain that life without her is a blank failure. The point on which we split is quite as important as ever, only she is more important than anything. In the summer I lost my head and behaved like an utter donkey. That increases my difficulties now. Time has made me see that I was very touchy, very full of myself. It would have been so easy"—here his voice broke a little, like an impatient horse, but he had it under in a minute and went on as dryly as if he were reading off a column of figures. "Instead of flying into heroics, I had only to wait till we were alone, instead of— Did I tell you what I wrote her, Mr. Josephs?"

"Not a word. You only said you left her."

"Well!" Julian's voice was full of exasperated astonishment. "I wrote her that I couldn't marry her if she'd ask me. Did you believe any decent man could play such a fool trick as that?" He smoked away in silent disgust.

Finally Mr. Josephs spoke. "If she cared, she must be rather unhappy."

This view had never presented itself to Julian. "I don't think she cared. How could she?" The young man was quite honest. "But I'm sure she is very angry."

"You hardly left it in her power to apologize," remarked Mr. Josephs.

"Apologize!" Julian broke in hotly. "That isn't the way! What she said was an insult, not intentional, but not to be ignored. If she'd struck me, I'd have kissed her! For this, the only possible reparation was to make her marry me then and there——"

Flushing, he stopped short, having quite overestimated his ability to review the situation with impersonal calmness. Throwing self-control to the winds, he sprang up and, facing Mr. Josephs, spoke in an eager, vibrating tone, his quick words pouring out turbulent and not to be denied.

"Of course, now she will refuse to have anything to do with me, and quite right too. That must be overcome. You'll see! I mean to have her whether she will or no. I'll marry first and settle our differences later. Good-by, old friend! After this, four walls can't hold me till I've walked myself into some semblance of peace of mind. Good-night."

After Julian's abrupt departure, Mr. Josephs lit another cigar and slowly paced up and down the room; then, coming to the table, carefully chose a new quill pen and without pause or alteration wrote a short letter. He had decided that at certain times there is equal responsibility in being passive and in acting, and all his life long he had preferred to feel his own hand on the rudder. Having sealed the letter with an admirable Roman intaglio, he rang.

"God grant it's not a mistake," he murmured, adding aloud as the old woman answered his summons, "See this is mailed to-night, will you, Hannah? By morning I might be of two minds about the wisdom of sending it," he reflected with a whimsical smile.

The next day a most unusual condition prevailed in the Brand household. Dating from the arrival of the mail, the lady of the house was in a settled bad humor, and showed it by criticising Edith's clothes, sending word to the cook that her omelettes grew uneatable, and finally refusing to go with her niece to Alice Wyndham's wedding, an entertainment so select that only twice as many guests as the house would hold had been bidden to the breakfast.

In spite of the time of year, the church was thronged with well-dressed people. Buzz and chatter filled the air. Edith felt strangely external. It seemed a queer pagan rite, rather odious and void of meaning. Ladies in exquisite costumes greeted one another across the aisles. Stiff ushers, unspeakably solemn and almost obliterated by huge white boutonnieres, tried to look equal to the task of placing guests aright.

"It's like the day of judgment," whispered Edith to a neighbor, "and these wretched young men have to sift out the sheep and the goats."

"The lists have been gone over very carefully," the lady answered, quite missing Edith's point of view.

"Dear me," the girl went on, "there is 'Lohengrin.' Really, I don't think it's a lucky piece for weddings."

"It's always played," answered the lady, "and the 'Mendelssohn' does for coming down the aisle." Her tone was so disapproving that Edith checked further sallies, critically watching the entry of the bride's mother, the groom's mother, a troop of families, and an octette of ushers holding inverted silk hats firmly to their breasts. Then came a self-conscious maid of honor, and the bridesmaids, pleased with their pins but angry at unbecoming hats. Leaning on her father's arm, the bride followed at a slow, artificial pace, and looking even less human than a wax fashion-figure.

The service proceeded, thoroughly obscured by Schubert's "Serenade" with variations. Edith pondered over the show. How could any creatures with feelings put themselves through such a travesty? How could any feelings survive such a deluge of millinery and fuss? This wasn't a real wedding, but an alliance. They had probably done it for convenience, as she might have married Mr. Tottinghame, to have an establishment and give dinners. But the bride was coming down the aisle, her veil turned back, her hand lightly resting on her husband's arm.

No, it was not like that! The ceremony, the fuss, that was for the other people. The penalty these two were indifferent about paying for the sake of a possession, something they were carrying away together, something that for the moment at least made their faces as the faces of angels. With raised heads and eyes full of exaltation, they looked straight past the crowd out on a future of happiness. Edith thrilled sympathetically with a vision of what they were anticipating, the blessed companionship. There they stood, shoulder to shoulder, a unit, facing the world. After a time this wave of people would recede, leaving these two who understood each other alone, but never again lonely. Edith could have wept at the sense of isolation which encompasses all young unmated creatures. It seemed as if she

projected about her an atmosphere in which no other human being could live. Aching with the cold of it, she wondered if that pain was to be her lifelong burden.

One thing was certain. She could and would avoid the wedding breakfast. The idea of the crowd, the heat, the noise, filled her with disgust till she pined for quiet and solitude.

"Did you come back for anything, Miss?" Jane asked at the door.

"No. It was too crowded and I'm tired. Thanks. You needn't tell Mrs. Brand I've come in." Edith had no wish to endure her aunt's capable scrutiny till she had regained some degree of composure. Half way upstairs she remembered having left a book in the library and retraced her steps. At the threshold a jewelled pin dropped from her veil, and, groping for it in the depth of a heavy rug, she plainly distinguished voices through the drawn portières. Before she realized that it was flagrant eavesdropping, she had heard enough momentarily to suspend her power of action. It was a man's voice, soft and low, but penetrating from its perfect clearness. The tone, almost caressing, contrasted oddly with the masked hostility of his words.

"On the whole, Mrs. Brand, you have chosen wisely in declining to tell this to Miss Linton yourself."

"I do not intend anyone to tell her." Mrs. Brand's manner was frankly brutal.

The other voice went on, quite undisturbed.

"With your—a—predilections—you could hardly be expected to make this revelation in a very sympathetic fashion. I cannot, however, agree with you in thinking it best to conceal so important a fact from your niece altogether. Indeed, in the course of the legal formalities she would inevitably discover it. When under the impression that the legatee was a man, I considered it necessary to explain every detail. The mere difference of sex in no way alters my opinion."

"My niece"—Mrs. Brand's voice was vulgarly passionate—"is of a very sensitive nature. No one can foresee the effect of such a revelation on her."

The gentle voice persisted. "All the more reason for its being made by someone who does not consider it a revelation of disgrace."

Erect and trembling, Edith suddenly remembered her position as a listener, and, swiftly thrusting aside the heavy curtains, she walked to the middle of the room.

"Aunt Margaret, what is this? What does this gentleman threaten to tell me? Nothing that he could say would make me think less well of you. Shall I send him away?"

Turning arrogantly on the obnoxious stranger, she found an elderly man, small but not insignificant, effective for all his gentleness,

with an indefinable charm that soothed and attracted her in spite of every intention to be angry and repellent.

He courteously motioned Mrs. Brand to speak, and she burst out coarsely. "This gentleman, as you call him, Edith, has come to announce that you have inherited a princely fortune. Fifteen hundred dollars, did you say?"

"Fifteen thousand," said the stranger politely.

"But he simply makes this an excuse for telling you a disgraceful family secret. Your mother was a Miss Aaronson, a common Jewess! His name is Josephs!—Abraham Josephs!"

"Dear me! I'm so glad she was white!" Edith's flippancy stood her in good stead. Without its aid she must have cried with relief. For the last few minutes her imagination had been rioting in such horrors that this, by contrast, was only a picturesque surprise. Then, with herself, at least, she was honest. If Julian should learn this, if he came back now, what then? Her mind leaped to this only to reject it as impossible. She might be dropped and not resent it, but to be picked up again was a point beyond any self-respecting woman.

Intelligent enough to dread the antagonizing effect of her own temper on Edith, Mrs. Brand swept from the room, saying, "Any further explanation had better be made in my absence."

Mr. Josephs was quietly observing Edith, whose pale, drawn face gave no hint of the quality of her pain. Slowly she recovered enough to speak, steadying her voice with obvious effort.

"This is true?"

"Yes, Miss Linton. You have been left a legacy by an uncle of your mother's. Her people had lost all trace of you, and asked me to look you up."

"I don't mean about the money." She was looking down now, fingering a magazine.

"Is the other part of your inheritance a great trial to you?"

Her answer was long in coming. "It's a great surprise, a dislocation. I can't quite see where I stand. It changes the whole face of life, yet I think—I think it may bring me peace of mind."

He saw the painful color mounting slowly to her cheeks as she stood motionless and enchanting in her wedding bravery, too proud to attempt hiding the blushes she could not master.

"Then you've not been happy?" he asked.

Edith's last doubts melted away before the sympathy in Mr. Josephs's voice. Overcome by a strange wave of feeling, she walked swiftly to the mantel-piece and, hiding her face, was shaken with sudden, unmanageable sobs. Making no attempt to check her, he sat at the table writing; then, going to her, spoke so tenderly that she felt irresistibly quieted and comforted.

"If you don't mind the fact, dear child, there's nothing else to fear. You come of an honorable family. Who knows? Some day you may even grow to feel as I do. If I were to be born again, I must still choose to be a Jew, if only because in no other race is the call of blood so imperative, so satisfying."

Edith turned on him blurred and tear-stained eyes. "I know! I know!" she whispered breathlessly, "the call of blood! That's it! I've felt it."

The radiance of Mr. Josephs's smile gave promise of infinite succor and understanding. "And the look of race too, dear child. You show it—the finest, rarest type. But we can't talk now, not here, can we? Here is my address. If you feel like seeing me, come to-morrow at twelve."

Lightly he laid a caressing hand on her shoulder and was gone before she found words to reply.

IX.

MR. JOSEPHS IS A GENTLEMAN!

WHEN Mr. Josephs left Edith alone she fled to her own room and, locking the door, deliberately sat down in front of the mirror and subjected herself to the closest scrutiny, hunting for that look of race of which he had spoken with such approval.

In her experience, except for the poor people in the quarter, a Jewess was a plethoric, mustachioed person, hook-nosed and with a figure adapted to the display of corset and jewels. Looking at herself, she decided that this impression was subject to revision; then, remembering that daughters notoriously resemble their fathers, she was for a moment in doubt. All at once Mr. Josephs's fine, intellectual head recurred to her memory. He had as little in common with the average rich Jew man noisily dining at a restaurant, as the Duke of Wellington with a dog-faced Irish Tammany heeler, or a well-bred gentleman with the kind of Christian New Yorker she had sometimes seen on ocean steamers. It was all very strange. She thought of a thousand little things, small enough in themselves but marking incalculable changes. Now she could never say, "We Anglo-Saxons, we Aryans." Why! She was half-Semite; she belonged to the East; she had remote, unknown affinities. No wonder she suffered from strange yearnings, instincts different from the people about her. Julian! He was the same. No wonder they had come together, no wonder. She would go to Mr. Josephs. She would tell him the whole thing. The mere telling might ease her sore heart of a load. Then, perhaps— Yet how could she? He was all Jew; how could he understand? Besides, he was, after all, a stranger. What did she know of his discretion? He might exercise tactful benevolence and

send for Julian. She turned red at the thought. No, not that. Julian had practically refused her once. She couldn't risk going through that again.

In the meantime Mr. Josephs strolled down the street well pleased. Least interfering of mortals, since Fate had thrust upon him the role of *deus ex machinâ*, he was by no means the man to shirk; indeed, a person must be something better than the saints not to embrace an opportunity of avenging coarse insults and helping a cherished friend, all with a few easy strokes of the pen. When he had talked with Julian about the unpleasantness of coming in contact with people who treated him rudely on account of his race, he might with truth have added that such lack of manners frequently developed a reflex of unpleasantness in the direction of the aggressors. As he sat writing at his desk in the bank, an inscrutable smile more than once flitted across his face, a smile invoked by a delicately malicious vision of the troubles in store for Mrs. Brand.

That outraged lady, on the other hand, was smarting with a sense of undeserved ill-usage. She had habitually done her whole duty as she saw it, with a tacit but binding agreement that Providence was to reward her righteousness in this world and at once by prospering all her undertakings. Her usual poise was completely upset by the desertion of this lifelong ally. Smoothed the right way, she was of softest silk, but a turn in the wrong direction produced a rasping array of bristles. In spite of Edith's having shown much consideration for her aunt's feelings, the bristles were markedly in the ascendant when the two met after breakfast on the morning following Mr. Josephs's visit.

Edith was of twenty minds about keeping her appointment. The desire to talk of Julian was so insistent that she almost feared to trust herself in the presence of this sympathetic stranger; yet she well knew that her story was such as could not fittingly be put into words. Her going quivered in the balance when Mrs. Brand's self-control gave way with a snap.

"I see by this morning's paper that the Goldbergs have come back from Long Branch, Edith," she remarked scathingly. "No doubt they are relatives of yours and will do us the honor of leaving cards before long."

Remembering Mr. Josephs's perfect courtesy, Edith felt a sense of rising antagonism.

The gods had evidently decided on Mrs. Brand's destruction, for she went on: "And Mr. and Mrs. Ezekiel Blum announce the betrothal of their daughter, Rachel Birdie, to Mr. Samuel Aaronson, oldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Haman Aaronson, of Yonkers. That's your own first cousin, Edith!"

"Mr. Josephs is a gentleman," Edith broke in with rising warmth, "why shouldn't these people be all right too?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Ezekiel Blum!" Mrs. Brand reiterated, by way of unanswerable argument.

"You've no right to judge from that, Aunt Margaret. It's different but not a bit worse than the real society news." The girl read over her aunt's shoulder, "'Mr. and Mrs. Reggie Smirk will open their Newport villa, Sehr Schön, for a Hallowe'en party. Their guests will bob for real apples in silver tubs. Champagne will be used instead of water.' Now, if you can imagine anything vulgarer than that! Only we are so used to it that it doesn't strike us."

"Well, Edith,"—Mrs. Brand was regaining an atom of discretion,—"of course, I can't hinder you, but I must say you are very ungrateful to show the slightest interest in these people after all the pains I've taken to save you from the disadvantages of being involved with such a crew."

This benefit hardly appealed to Edith, who at this minute felt there might have been compensations in knowing more of her own flesh and blood.

"And there's just one thing more," Mrs. Brand went on with unction. "Remember, once you overstep the barrier and associate yourself with them, you'll find it a very different matter to get rid of them. They won't——"

"Excuse me, aunt,"—Edith looked at the clock,—"I've an appointment and it's late." She hurried from the room, to reappear in a few minutes dressed for the street in the longest and loosest of buff coats, the most aggressive dogskin gloves, and an impertinent little toque set awry on her soft, gold hair.

"Mercy on me, child! Is the house burning down?" Having relieved her mind, Mrs. Brand cooled off considerably, and was, moreover, secretly mollified by seeing how Edith's air of distinction prevailed in spite of the most wilful disregard of appearance.

"Burning down! What do you mean?" Edith spoke indistinctly, tying a heavy veil over her face.

"Only that you look as if you had bundled on a few things while the fireman waited to carry you down the ladder. You are vraitment fagotée, my dear, and those are good clothes too."

"It's what the advertisements call a business suit." Edith's tone was impenetrable. "You see, I'm going to collect my inheritance, and as it is so small I'll take it in dimes and bring it home in these big pockets."

This mood of defiance carried the girl buoyantly to Irving Place, then ebbed. Feeling shy and irresolute, she walked slowly towards Sixteenth Street. The corner factory filled the air with an over-

powering smell of chocolate. From the second-story window of a livery-stable a countrified looking white horse thrust his head, which seemed singularly out of place. A showy German actor with brilliant high-heeled shoes hurried southward towards the theatre. Apparently he had forgotten something, for he turned and retraced his steps. Edith had almost reached her destination, but was quite undecided whether to trust herself to Mr. Josephs or go quietly home and think out her position a little more clearly. The actor suddenly appeared at her elbow, walking abreast of her, radiating such conquering glances that, without further hesitation, she went swiftly up Mr. Josephs's steps and gave a brisk pull at the bell.

She was shown into a large parlor filled with the most obnoxious objects: early Victorian furniture with hideous faded covers; flat, dry portraits of thick-set men in stocks, women in blazing satins, heavy gold chains, and mob caps. Though little above the grade of sign painting, these pictures had a convincing air of likeness. The marble-topped tables were piled with ancient gift-books and their modern equivalents, impossible smoking outfits in silvered Benares ware and bronze. There were dreadful easels with plush-framed pictures on china, thermometers let into paper-knives, cloisonné ash-receivers in the form of inverted silk hats.

Edith became a prey to misgivings. Could Mr. Josephs's manner and appearance be purely accidental? What if Mrs. Brand were right, and this awful room should prove the true measure of his scale of civilization?

A brisk, wizened old woman had come in noiselessly and was surveying her with much good-will.

"You are Miss Linton, Miss?" she asked.

On Edith's assenting, she continued: "Mr. Josephs said he might be a minute late, and would you kindly wait here, if you didn't mind the smell of paint. You see, there's workmen in the dining-room, and the whole place is that upset——"

"Indeed, it doesn't look so," said Edith politely.

"Well, it's a big house, that's one good thing, and Mr. Josephs takes all his meals in the study. Are you quite comfortable, Miss? Won't you just have a glass of wine and a cake while you wait?"

As Edith was declining this offer, a latch-key sounded in the front door, and Mr. Josephs, coming in, greeted her with his characteristic gentle smile.

"What do you think of my chamber of horrors, Miss Linton?" he asked when the old woman had left them. "This room has a name known only to myself and one other person. I'm tempted to confide it to you. Are you discreet?"

"Silent as the grave." Edith was beginning to feel more at ease.

"The Temple of Friendship." His eyes were full of whimsical, kindly amusement.

"Oh, what a good idea! You have one place that can't be spoiled by presents!"

"My dear young lady, isn't that a rather harsh way of putting it? This apartment is dedicated to sentiment. Here are my parents' wedding furniture, the portraits of my great-great-grandparents. One can't throw such things away. Then when anyone kindly gives me a beaten-brass sofa-cushion, or a vase that doesn't hold flowers, there is an honorable asylum for it in a room I almost never enter. Will you come up to my study and let me make a confession?"

The air of the study set Edith's doubts at rest. It was so right in every particular, so quiet, so completely without pretence.

"There's nothing ugly here," she said, looking about her with unconcealed appreciation.

"Do you think you can entertain yourself alone for a few minutes?" Mr. Josephs asked. "The fact is, at the last minute I was unexpectedly summoned to a meeting I can hardly avoid going to. If you could wait a little while, if you would be so good, so very good, as not to mind——"

"I've all the time in the world." Edith was glad of the delay.

"Well, it won't really waste your whole morning, because I've sent for a lawyer to go over the papers with you. Those are they, on the desk,"—Edith saw a neatly tied package of documents,—"*and* I thought perhaps that if you would be good enough to take lunch with me, we could talk things over at leisure." He glanced at his watch. "I must be off, with your permission?"

"This is a nice place to wait. I sha'n't lack things to read. Pray don't let me make you late."

Instead of reading, Edith sank into a particularly comfortable chair and tried to put some order in her thoughts. The money itself meant nothing to her; she had never felt the need of it. But there were countless questions she wanted to ask about her mother,—had Mr. Josephs known her? about books to read, books which shou'd tell her something of her people. The doorbell had rung; she heard steps on the stairs. With an air of the completest unconcern, Julian Meldohla walked into the room.

"I'm sorry to be late," he began in a tone suited to addressing a strange woman in a thick, dark veil. Then he broke out suddenly, "In God's name, quick! Who are you?"

"The Aaronson legatee." Instinctively Edith covered her excitement with a tone of icy displeasure, but to save her life she could not have uttered another word. Angry, ashamed, feeling trapped, feeling physically faint and overcome, she lay back helpless in the deep arm-chair.

Julian stood with his back to the mantel-piece, his arms folded. His tense pose spoke of quick thought, high concentration. He was planning a campaign. She must make ready to resist. Or perhaps he was merely hunting a ground on which they could meet without embarrassment. Obviously she must at once show that they met on the basis of the present only, that the past was completely buried.

Suddenly he spoke. "Rather hard luck, isn't it?"

"To have an unexpected legacy? I thought people generally found that bearable." She had gained enough composure to stand up and walk towards the desk.

"Oh, the money!" Julian was still thinking, and his voice sounded a little remote.

"Yes, the money!" Edith was quite disagreeable and incisive. "That's what we are here to talk about if, as I suppose, you are the lawyer Mr. Josephs expected."

"Well, then," he went on quite cheerfully, blind to her ill-humor, "let us read these papers over, then we can talk about—other things"—he gave her a look—"later."

"I should prefer settling the necessary business and leaving at once." Edith was annoyed to hear her own voice sound much more cross than dignified.

"Of course," he agreed, "just as you wish." Being with her had gone to his head like wine, till any difficulty she might make seemed ludicrously small and unimportant beside the fact that they were within four walls alone together.

"So you are one of us, after all," he went on. "Do you mind much?" Half sitting on the desk, he faced her, and, taking up one of the packets of documents, he cursorily examined the memorandum on the back of each paper.

"That is neither here nor there," she spoke frostily, hardening her heart against the contagious naturalness of his manner.

"Of course not! What earthly difference should it make?"

His ready acquiescence added to the sense of unreality with which she was struggling. A bad-dream feeling of helpless inertia was creeping over her; yet the dream was not wholly bad.

In a perfectly business-like tone he continued: "This is a very long matter, Miss Linton, as it will take us ages and ages to go over these papers. If you will permit me to make a suggestion, you will sit here, in this chair, so that we can spread everything out on the desk. Thank you. Now, while you take off your veil, I'll see which paper comes first."

Edith was glad of the chair; since her treacherous knees had gone over to the enemy dignity seemed best served by sitting. The stiff clasp of the dogskin gloves resisted her trembling fingers. It

was an appreciable time before this difficulty was conquered and she had freed her face from its covering. Then she looked up at him, forgetting her attitude of complete formality, and spoke in a tone of friendly acrimony. "I don't believe you've so much as given a look at those papers! You aren't even trying to be ready."

"No," he said slowly and imperturbably, "I've been looking at you. It's going to be a difficult matter to manage. If your veil is down, you can't see to read this crabbed legal writing; if it's up, I can't keep my mind or my tongue to business."

"In that case, perhaps—another lawyer——" She made as if to rise, civilly implying dismissal.

Quicker than fire he came towards her. "Don't go. Don't try to go. Sit down. You'll be sorry if I touch you now. God in heaven! girl, are we going to waste precious time haggling about our holy dignities? That's not the question; put it away this minute; it's of no consequence."

"Mr. Meldohla, you've no right to take advantage of finding me here. Let me pass. I'm going home."

"Well, you can't!" His imperious tone overrode all resistance. They stood braced for opposition, two quivering young creatures whose eyes couldn't leave each other's faces.

"You might just as well stay and talk to me now." Julian had regained some self-control and spoke with a quiet assurance very difficult to combat. "You see," he went on, "you are in for it sooner or later, no matter what you do. If you run off now, I'll just see you again, maybe in a less convenient place. I'm going to see you, Edith, that's certain,—in your own house, in somebody else's, at the theatre, in the street." He waited for her answer.

"Very well, Mr. Meldohla, but perhaps you will kindly listen to me for a moment first. You may as well understand once for all that my mind is quite made up as to our future relations."

Edith had incidentally discovered an exasperating inability to wield a calmly judicial manner if once her eyes met his; consequently she missed the flash of joy and mischief that lit up his face at her dry, precise little speech. Edith using set phrases had no terrors for him; he perfectly understood that when she needed to employ this artificial defence the day was really won. It merely remained for him so to manage the surrender that she might march out with all the honors of war, band playing, colors flying. If he could only keep his head, she would be sure to lose hers.

He began, sedately enough, "At least, you won't refuse to accept my apologies for writing?"

"Apologies!" Edith felt equally convinced that the barriers between them were insurmountable. "This is hardly a fit case for

apologies, Mr. Meldohla. I made an unpardonable error which you deliberately punished. A man can't well do more than tell a woman what you wrote me. All the apologizing in the world can't change what has passed between us. It only remains for us to take the unavoidable consequences of our actions."

"There's just where we differ. I don't see that making one mistake or twenty should oblige me to go on making them forever. Last summer I behaved like Daniel Deronda in petticoats. Oh, the ass, the prig, the blatant pious fool that I made of myself! Then the idea of thinking that you were the kind of person one could get over caring for. You see,"—this dropped out with a specious air of innocence,—“I never before had the slightest difficulty in forgetting a girl—lots of them, in fact.”

"Probably," said Edith politely, "you haven't given it quite long enough time."

"Time! I haven't hold enough on eternity to forget you. Besides, I don't want to."

"Suppose my opinions are unchanged?"

"Your opinions! Think what you please. I care for you, not your opinions."

"Then you have a very low and superficial view of what constitutes an ideal relation between man and woman." In uttering this excellent sentiment, Edith's voice, even to her own ears, sounded unconvincing, but it became quite natural and full of resentment as she went on to the point which really rankled. "And now you are willing to overlook my disqualifications, since you have found me not wholly undesirable?"

"I think you wholly desirable, my dear." The rising warmth in Julian's voice gave her a sense of danger, and she liked it. He went on more reasonably. "But this recent discovery about your mother's people has nothing to do with that. I'd already found out the relative importance of everything in the world—and you. Here, read this letter."

"Your private correspondence is of no interest to me." She let him stand, holding towards her an open envelope.

He was smiling. "Please remember that statement for future use."

"Future?" Edith spoke unwarily.

"Yes, when we are married. Edith, Edith, why do you make me tease you so? Don't you see I can't be sensible? It's far too serious for that. Don't you see? The golden doors of heaven are open for us and you are trying to slam them in our faces just because I happen to be a fool. Haven't you a better reason? Of course, if you don't like the way I light a cigarette, or anything vital like that, it's no use talking, but if it's some absurd point of abstract behavior, I can assure

you from personal experience that's not the sort of thing that counts. If you will only read——"

As he stood there, vivid, alert, encroaching, he was so exactly to her taste that to avoid a direct answer Edith pointed to the letter. "Please, if you wish, read this to me," she murmured.

Unfolding it, he at once began:

"DEAR JULIAN: Please come to my house at twelve to-morrow to go over the papers of the Aaronson estate with the legatee. Upon inquiry my young man turns out to be a woman. If you weren't so utterly devoted to the mysterious lady of last summer, I should expect to find you a good deal impressed by this young lady. I think her a siren, but a siren hampered, perhaps, by feelings.

"I wonder what she would think of your plan for conquering your refractory maiden. You said, 'I'll just marry her whether or no, and we will settle our differences later.'

"Be at my office at twelve if you can, and if I'm not there, go on without me. The papers will be ready.

"Yours,

"A. JOSEPHS."

You see," Julian commented, "I couldn't do without you, if you were the Grand Inquisitor himself. That point's well disposed of. Now let me take your hand, dear. Oh, of course you don't like it, but you must."

Holding the charming, sensitive hand in his, he seemed quite forgetful of her, devoting his whole energy to warming the chilly, trembling fingers with his warm ones, whose contact sent queer, confusing little thrills up into her brain. Vainly she tried to shut off this current; something had happened to her, leaving her without a faculty at command. Five minutes ago, a perfectly self-possessed person, she had unmistakably dismissed him. Now she could muster neither power nor will against his aggressions. Shy and helpless, she struggled with the narcotic silence, and finally breathed out in a swooning voice: "It's a strange letter. He understands some things, not all, your friend. I'd be a very pitiful kind of siren."

"And is he right about the feelings?" Julian had come nearer. "It's easy to find out." Held close in his arms, hot with his fire, weak with his strength, she murmured, "Perhaps, but let me go; here I can't think."

"Think, dear! No! This is the way to tell." And as his lips touched hers she knew.

A discreet cough on the threshold sent Julian and Edith a yard apart, but their starry-eyed pallor would have betrayed them to a less penetrating person than old Hannah.

"Mr. Julian, dear. Mr. Josephs said I was to serve lunch up here at one o'clock. He said there would be two people, and I wasn't to wait for him."

Julian gave Edith a glance of infinite, tender amusement. "The wicked old wizard," he whispered, going on aloud to Hannah in a voice of prankish glee: "Hannah, are you sure you're doing yourself justice? Miss Linton expects the greatest things of you because I've taken such trouble to bring her here. She's never tasted one good Kosher dish in her life. Oh, she's an awful sinner, Hannah. She butters her meat, and drinks cream with her dinner, and whenever she sees a little kid she just runs and seethes it in its mother's milk. But you can shake hands with her. It isn't catching. She will learn better by and by."

"Why, Mr. Julian! I thought you said she wasn't grown up yet?" said the old woman, beaming.

"No? You are afraid of her? Then I'll do it for you." Julian held out his hand to Edith, but she went towards the old woman, speaking very shyly, very gently.

"Will you shake hands with me, Hannah? And don't worry about the lunch. We only came here for a few minutes' business talk."

"We!" thought Julian, triumphant, but he merely said: "Don't you believe her, Hannah. All the way here she has been hoping you would have some chocolate in the house."

"Dear life, Mr. Julian! Of course I have, chocolate and cold fish and mandeltorte and many nice things. I only wish you would bring me this lovely young lady every day." With a wise smile she went on, "Too bad I kept you so long, Mr. Julian, but for her no ordinary dish would do." Turning to Edith she pleaded, "My dear, old Hannah can't hurry now as she once could, so please be very kind, and when the time comes give fair, long notice, for no one else must have the honor of making ready Mr. Julian's marriage-feast."



RED MAPLES

BY CHARLES FRANCIS SAUNDERS

AGAINST the swarthy background of bare woods
Glow the red maples' flaming flowers in March,
Like torches by the hand of Flora lifted
To light her in the dusk of the young year's dawn
Until the splendor of her risen day.

INTELLECTUAL COMMUNISM

By Sara Yorke Stevenson

Author of "Maximilian in Mexico"

IN the good old days of absolutism—when the great mass of the people was allowed to exist but was scarcely encouraged to live—trained wisdom was a precious privilege reserved as a rule for the elect few. The free giving of advice was thought as highly meritorious as almsgiving. It was one of those acts the performance of which entitled the performer to the gratitude of his fellow-men in this world and to the appreciative recognition of the Gods in the life beyond.

Many a sepulchral monument whose grim occupant was long forgotten when Moses led Israel out of Egypt tells not only how the defunct fed the hungry and otherwise provided for the unfortunate and the friendless who came within his official orbit, but how he placed his wisdom at the command of his benighted contemporaries. These, when caught in the toils set for them by their own inexperience, no doubt felt as keen an appreciation of such timely intellectual service as they could have done for any ministration to their physical needs. It was regarded by both parties as a boon generously bestowed and gratefully received.

In the same good old days the bond between teacher and disciple was a close one. It established, so to speak, a spiritual relation. It presupposed on the part of the former a profound knowledge of essential verities, on the part of the latter a loyal and relatively humble attitude of mind.

Throughout our middle ages—although the development of the schools and universities gradually modified ancient methods as well as the scope of education—the tie which bound the teacher to those who benefited by his teachings was still one of condescension on the one side and of respectful loyalty on the other.

To-day, however, the spirit of democracy has invaded the realm of the intellect, as it has the social and political world. The feeling governing every human relation has changed. Under the new dispensation the more or less educated masses, whilst dreaming of a social system by which, some day, they may share as a right the accumulated wealth of their more thrifty or cleverer fellow-citizens, already share with them most of their privileges. The revolutionary move-

ment which started in the eighteenth century seems to be approaching its extreme development. The hateful oppression then exercised by the few over the many is now in a fair way to be replaced by the unjust tyranny of the many over the few.

The view that sees in the Executive not the master, but the servant of the nation, extends to leadership in every class of society. The barriers surrounding intellectual strongholds have been torn down and their exclusiveness broken into. Unhesitatingly—at times arrogantly—a claim is laid by the public to the hard-earned knowledge and experience of the scholar, and any demur on his part is resented.

He may, of course, resist the "intelligent public," as any independent laborer may resist the union; but he does it at his own peril—i.e., at the peril of his popularity, and consequently of the success of such scientific or literary interests as he may represent.

There is a growing, if unexpressed, belief pervading every sphere of our social structure that as the State is entitled to levy a tax upon its citizens in exchange for the comforts secured by them while living under its protection, so is the community entitled to tax every citizen who has achieved intellectual distinction, in exchange for such benefits as he may derive therefrom. This view is no doubt correct, but taxation is recognized as legitimate only in so far as it is kept within just limits, and to-day an individual's talents are as grudgingly admitted to be his own as is his wealth. No sooner does a man display a capacity above that of the average than he becomes a target for the steady and diversified demands of his fellow-citizens. Here a dignified and deeply learned Shakespearean scholar is dragged out of his retreat to read for the benefit of a school of art needle-work,—and he may deem himself fortunate if a preface extolling the school's achievement is not also exacted of his good nature,—there a former ambassador is torn from his distant Western haunts and gently but firmly brought to an Eastern church hall to talk about the Spanish War to an audience of messenger boys. Nor does it make much difference if he knows but little of Spain and if his career has led him exclusively through paths of peace. He is a personage. The Spanish War is the topic of the day. The people wish to see and hear him; it becomes a public duty. He must pay the tax levied upon his prominence. Indeed, little discrimination is made by the new tyrant as to his victim's qualification for the task imposed upon him. Whether he is a savant, a litterateur, a statesman, an actor, a journalist, or a diplomat, every man of note, unless he consistently surrounds himself with a frigid atmosphere of chilling selfishness, will sooner or later find himself a slave.

The new species of slavery now and then leads to acts of positive cruelty. Who, for instance, has not seen an actor—after the exhausting climax of the act in which single-handed he has killed or disabled

seven or more ruffians and rescued his lady-love—brought out, panting, before the curtain—every nerve in his body quivering under the strain—and forced then and there by vociferous clamor to “make a speech” to the comfortable audience? He has but a few minutes for a much-needed rest before the next act, and the speech, if speech there must be, might well be left until the end of the play when his work will be over. But the public is inexorable. Like the Roman public of old, when holding the gladiator at its mercy, it is unmerciful. It may be argued, however, that the actor is following his profession, and that if the extra demand made upon him is ungenerous, it should be put to the profit-and-loss account of his business. But this is not the case with regard to other lines of intellectual work.

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However highly specialized a distinguished man's acquirements may be, the public invariably attempts to turn him into a “general utility” man. The insatiable monster will fasten upon his brain its tentacles, whose well-nigh irresistible suckers, by breaking down his singleness of purpose, must eventually waste his strength and leave him an inert, nerveless mass, the pliability of which renders it more or less useless for any well-directed, concentrated effort.

At times the public demand creates amusing situations: A clever political Janus, who by alternate conversions has always managed to obtain recognition, and consequently fat offices, from whichever party was in power, may be seen addressing an audience of reformers on political integrity. Or a multi-millionaire may be brought to extol the dignity of poverty to an assemblage of laboring people. But aside from such incongruities, which may foreshadow a falling off in the national sense of humor, it is very doubtful if the prevalent practice of indiscriminate public speaking will in the end result in a real gain to the people at large. Indeed, at present it is perceptibly developing certain well-defined evil tendencies among us. One of these is an increasing intellectual laziness on the part of the average citizen which leads him to seek his information at third and fourth hand and makes him satisfied with approximate knowledge approximately conveyed. This may be an economy of time, but it is destructive of the clearness of mind which is to be acquired only by the cultivation of a habit of strict accuracy. On the other hand, an alluring temptation is held out to the fluent speaker to deal authoritatively with topics outside his special line of research of which he may possess but the most rudimentary knowledge and which he may even “look up” for the occasion.

Many a man now steps upon the platform to teach and direct other minds, not out of the fulness of his own, but from hastily collected material superficially worked out at short notice. Such unsubstantial

erudition could not stand a moment's intelligent quizzing, and is only indulged in at the expense of that intellectual vigor which is the reward of painstaking investigation of original sources or, at least, by the study at first hand of the highest authorities. The only possible result of such conditions is a dead level of mediocrity and a lowering of the teaching platform, to which the advanced ranks of the laity aspire to climb, to their own doubtful advantage and often to the detriment of the dignity of learning.

I know a conscientious student who some years ago was approached by an institution which provides public lectures on an extensive scale with a view to a summer course for teachers on ancient civilizations. My friend agreed to take the first lecture on Egypt, but strongly advised the management to assign the others respectively to men who had made a special study of each subject involved. For some reason best known to themselves, those in charge preferred that one person should deliver the entire course. There was, therefore, no alternative but to decline, and the matter ended.

The following spring a professor at a great Eastern university called upon my colleague for assistance with regard to these very lectures, which he had undertaken to deliver. He wanted the names of trustworthy authorities on Egyptian civilization from which he might draw the material necessary for his first lecture. He also submitted a preliminary syllabus on which he wished advice and invited criticism. Several of his headings were altogether fanciful. A first and somewhat embarrassing duty was, therefore, to inform him that part of his syllabus was based upon imaginary lines. An up-to-date bibliography was then offered him. But he requested that only the titles of one or two works should be given him in which he might find all that he needed "in a nutshell," adding that he would have no time to read more, as, owing to other pressing duties, he could not begin work on these lectures before June, and the first, which was this very one, was due July 5.

Now here was a man confessedly without any knowledge whatever of a subject the difficulties of which are such as tax to the utmost the ability of life-long students of original documents, and ignorant even of its bibliography, who yet did not hesitate to undertake at short notice to teach teachers. Although an excellent scholar in his own line of research, he felt no scruple in authoritatively dealing with many obscure problems quite new to him and upon which scholarly specialists would hardly have ventured to advance a decided opinion.

This, of course, is amusing as an example of modern intellectual makeshifts. But there is a serious aspect to the story, for, upon relating the incident to some scholarly friends, it was found that—whilst they laughed heartily over the incident—not one seemed ade-

quately to appreciate the counterfeit involved in the proceeding. It was obviously only the frank, and perhaps exaggerated, expression of a customary and now tolerated state of things.

•

Such an abuse of the platform is undoubtedly the outcome of contemporary conditions. The public is responsible for it. The wasteful scattering of brain-force which it exacts from the intellectual class creates the situation. As an illustration I may mention the case of a woman of my acquaintance who for thirty years or more had been interested in archæology. This led, some fifteen years ago, to the establishment of working relations of an honorary character with an Eastern university and to her laboring for the erection of a museum and for the development of certain collections. For several years she had been working quietly when, in 1893, she was appointed by the management of the Columbian Exposition a member of the Jury of Awards for Ethnology, of which she was subsequently elected Vice-President. This and a lecture delivered about that time at the Peabody Museum of Harvard University excited some newspaper comment and was sufficient to attract the attention of the "general public." At once a dozen or more literary enterprises devoted to woman's interests in as many sections of the country appealed to her womanly sympathy and asked for a contribution on some different and often uncongenial topic.

She was also asked to entertain audiences brought together in support of hospitals, negro churches, training-schools, and other equally deserving enterprises too numerous to recite. Anything would do, she was told—a story, something on culture, or personal experiences illustrated with slides if possible. But the "anything" so lightly asked for by the kindly manager of the impecunious though worthy institution often requires more preparation than a definite subject which lies in one's special line of thought. To one accustomed to think of something it is not always easy to speak about nothing.

Then, from time to time, her vanity was delicately flattered: Clubs or associations in more or less remote places wished to entertain her,—would she not address them? Again, anything would do, and when other arguments failed the irresistible appeal to a sense of duty was resorted to. The service was urged in the furtherance of a principle or of a good cause. The range of subjects, quite outside her legitimate line of work, which she was given the opportunity to expound over a territory extending from New England to Colorado covered some fifty-two topics; and this figure does not include introductory addresses delivered as presiding officer of various organizations or of meetings.

It is therefore safe to assert that what other men and women more able and better known than herself are called upon to do must be appalling to contemplate.

♦

The faith and enthusiasm of youth may at first delude one into regarding such a waste of energy in the light of a duty, perhaps even in that of a mission. There is also in the beginning a certain excitement in the novelty of the protean effort. The process of demoralization is insidious. But if you are not sufficiently clear-sighted to detect the danger that threatens your personality, or strong enough to draw away in time, your fate is sealed. You are doomed to sink into a public drudge.

Gradually, as the result of ill-resisted encroachments, the strong and complex arms of the monster take an ever-tightening hold, until not only personal indulgence, but serious work, become impossible. The reward for the sacrifice is usually the glittering, gold-washed bauble of popularity. But this, however attractive it may seem when first won, does not wear as well as the solid gold of well-done work. It needs constant regilding under the fire of renewed effort, and rubs off easily under the friction created by the first refusal to comply. In the end it invariably proves a paltry return for the time and precious intellectual freedom which it has cost. For the man or woman who, to use the common jargon, "does things," however highly specialized those "things" may be, at once finds his or her time and liberty mortgaged.

In theory, this intrusion, as we have already seen, is based upon a long-established principle of righteous conduct.

"I have placed my wisdom at the disposal of the ignorant," said the sage some fifty-five hundred years ago when complacently reviewing his well-spent life. But, as practised at the present time, the result closely resembles piracy. It matters little if you are relieved of your intellectual valuables with formal or informal courtesy—the process is none the less thorough.

In the days of the above-quoted sage, the "ignorant" consulted him at his own leisure and subject to his own convenience. Against such a course no protest could fairly be entered. The duty was clear. Good feeling was appealed to, but personal liberty was respected. In his day the people, attached to the soil, did not rush over the country on express-trains and insist upon dragging him along with them to the extreme points of the compass to deliver speeches at openings and anniversary celebrations, or addresses at conventions. They did not call upon him to answer toasts at medical or international banquets, or to preach sermons to Western congregations. Moreover, the "ignorant" then were really ignorant. Their questions only taxed his

common-sense and his stock of ethical, legal, or magic lore. No doubt for the most part they could be answered off-hand. His free clientèle probably did not give him brain-racking riddles to guess, scientific controversies to settle, moral and social threads to disentangle.

There were no newspaper managers to set upon him, the ubiquitous reporter to beg for information on any and every subject. There were no friendly editors to telegraph to him in the middle of the night for a well-matured opinion as to the propriety of President McKinley taking up the game of "golf," for instance, or as to the impropriety of the King of Spain wedding an American girl. He was not interrupted while at dinner and asked for an off-hand answer to Cardinal Gibbons's last censure of the modern woman; and we may safely assume that he was never requested to act as judge of a baby show.

Now, if any dispassionate person will carefully consider the range of thought and ability necessary to do even approximate justice to the above topics, he will agree that the tax levied upon the brain of the improvised *Cedipus* is by no means a light one.

Of these four requests—picked almost at random out of a miscellaneous mass—the first presupposed information on social and official proprieties; the second, a general knowledge of court traditions and of international diplomatic relations; the third, thorough mastery of one of the most difficult problems of the day; and the fourth, a practical experience of child culture. Moreover, the last two of these four questions must of necessity be handled with tact, or discomfiture may follow; and only one—that relating to modern womanhood—falls directly under my special competence, and could willingly be dealt with by me. The mental strain thus required under time-pressure is therefore by no means inconsiderable. And when we remember that this kind of strain is daily, throughout the country, gratuitously imposed upon our busiest and most productive brains, it would seem that there is something radically wrong, if not in the system, at least in the manner in which it is practised.

Granting that the papers are the best judges as to whether such questions as the above are of interest to the "general public," and admitting that they must be answered by persons outside their usually most competent staff, should not some discrimination be observed in selecting among their friends and subscribers individuals who are especially qualified and whose technical opinion is of value?

That this is not always the case may be shown by the following incident:

A young woman of more than usual refinement called upon me one day to get for publication my opinion on the artistic excellence of a floral chromo to be issued as a bait to subscribers by a leading Sunday paper. I can see it now—a huge bunch of vividly white lilies

and purple lilacs spread upon a mottled gray background, the whole covering a double sheet somewhat smaller than the newspaper itself. She had been likewise instructed that morning to obtain an opinion upon the same chromo from one of the senior judges of the Orphans' Court! Finding the court in session, she sat down near the throne to await the recess. His Honor, however, who recognized her, wishing to spare her a long waiting, came to the bar during a pause in the proceedings and courteously asked what he could do for her. She demurred, and replied that she could wait; but he kindly pressed her. Whereupon, to her intense embarrassment, she was obliged to unroll the chromo before the entire court and then and there to state her absurd errand. The flush of mortification was still upon her cheek as she told her story; and when I burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter at the ridiculous situation, she looked reproachfully at me. To her just then the grotesque scene seemed tragic.

However convinced one may be of one's obligation to others, however desirous to help worthy enterprises, there are lines which one must draw in pure self-defence. And when one day, presumably because of my interest in ancient Egypt, I was requested to address some undertakers on the subject of the preservation of corpses, the limit appeared to me to have been reached.



The above can give only a faint idea of the number and variety of the claims made by the public upon an inconspicuous and relatively retiring individual. It leaves entirely out of question the proper demand for personal service or advice made by friends whom publicly or privately it is always a privilege to serve, or by acquaintances who, of course, are entitled to such helpful consideration as every human being owes to his neighbor. Why absolute strangers, unless in dire distress, should, however, feel that they have the same claim upon your time and interest is not quite so clear.

I was once called away from urgent work to see a strange woman who had selected as her profession mountain-climbing. She wished me, if possible, to raise funds for her ascent of Cotopaxi. If I could not see my way to do this, she wanted advice as to the best means of procedure. She was very friendly and volunteered an account of her career. She had started in life, she said, as an independent public lecturer on Greek archaeology. She had soon found, however, that there was little money and no "kudos" in the pursuit, so she had taken to mountain-climbing. She had made several more or less interesting ascents. This attracted much more public attention than her former profession. Generally there was not much trouble in making expenses. She had brought the whole thing down to a system and did not seem

in the least hurt at my declining to serve her. She was glad to have met me, she very kindly said. Nor did she seem to realize that she had done me an injustice in taking up an hour of my time for her own purposes. Indeed, on leaving she promised to call again. If she did, however, I never knew it.

This is only one of many similar experiences too numerous to mention. Of course, in the pursuit of one's studies, etiquette as well as ordinary good feeling prescribes that one shall hold oneself ready to help fellow-students with such facts, references, and suggestions as they may require. It is also de rigueur that questions relating to one's line of research, from whomsoever they may come, shall be as fully answered as possible.

In the first case the service is regarded in the light of a possible exchange of professional courtesy. Moreover, acknowledgment may be made of the time and labor consumed in the shape of a graceful recognition of the obligation incurred should the material furnished be used in publication. As a fact, however, whilst this formality is seldom omitted when the service is rendered by an illustrious scholar, there is a tendency to overlook it when a more modest student is concerned. But this in no way lessens the force of the established claim, and only demonstrates that there are more classes of snobs than those immortalized by Thackeray. Such occurrences, of course, should be put to the profit-and-loss account of one's work, and bear only a distant relation to the subject under consideration.

The tyrannical attitude of the general public towards the individual, however, may be illustrated by the case of an artist who one day called with reference to a memorial in the erection of which I had taken an active part. The man was an entire stranger to me. At the time I had never even heard his name, yet he insisted upon it that it was my duty to encourage local art and to turn over the work to a native artist. I replied that I should have preferred doing so had this course been possible, and I explained to him the perfectly valid reasons that had determined the action of the committee in placing the matter in the hands of a sculptor from another city. But although it was clear that the decision had been the result of a chain of unavoidable circumstances, his tone remained comminatory. With unabated severity he spoke on behalf of local public interests—brushing aside the serious personal considerations involved—as though he felt that we had no right to our time, our effort, or our own predilections. At first I was annoyed. Yet, after all, was he not merely voicing—perhaps a little more bluntly than usual—the feeling which at the present day pervades our entire social organism?—the feeling that marks the swinging of the pendulum from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, ushering among us the tyranny of the mass over the unit—the communistic

tendency of the public to claim as its due the individual's interest, his means, and his personality—the growing despotism of the democracy—the new faith according to which the leading classes have only duties and responsibilities and the people alone have “rights”?



AN OPTIMIST

BY FLORENCE EARLE COATES

“**O** AGED man, pray, if you know,
Now answer me the truth!—
Which of the gifts that the gods bestow
Is the greatest gift of youth?

“O aged man, I have far to fare
By the divers paths of Earth,
Say which of the gifts that with me I bear
Is the gift of the greatest worth?

“Is it the might of the good right arm,
Whereby I shall make my way
Where dangers threaten and evils harm,
Holding them still at bay?

“Is it the strength wherewith I shall climb
Where few before have trod—
To the mountain-tops, the peaks sublime
That glow in the smile of the god?

“Is it the never-failing will,
Invincible in might,
Which, armed against oppression still,
Shall vanquish for the right?

“Or is it the heart, thou aged man!—
The heart, impassioned, strong—
Which shall be blest, as naught else can,
In perfect love ere long?”

The old man smiled: the listening breeze
Grew whist on the sun-lit slope;
The old man sighed: “Ah, none of these!
Youth's greatest gift is its hope.”

THE FIDELITY OF A DOG

By Cy Warman

Author of "The Persecution of a Pup"



THE Baltynes came to Canada with plenty of money, but, as plenty is not enough for the average white man, Baltyne made more in the lumber-lands and more in the wheat-fields and flour-mills of Manitoba, and still more in the mines of the far Northwest. He was a big, wholesome, happy-natured man, but, as the years went by and his fortune grew with the growing country, there would come to him, in the logging-camp, in the wide wheat-fields, and in the miner's cabin, moments of utter loneliness.

Mrs. Baltyne had her moments of loneliness too. She longed and yearned for the sound of a baby's voice calling her mother. She was childless, and if she had married the commander of a submarine boat she would not have been much more alone, for so vast had her husband's fortune grown that they could scarcely see each other over the top of the heap.

At length, when she had sighed away six or seven summers, God blessed her and busied her with a beautiful baby boy. When the boy was two years old a friend of Baltyne's sent a pointer pup to play with him, and as no other heirs came to them the boy and the pup grew up together. Young Baltyne was a bright boy, and he taught the dog more tricks than most dogs ever learn. In summer they swam together, and in winter the dog, harnessed to a little red sled, gave the boy many a wild ride over the hard, snow-covered Canadian highways. Always they played together, and when the boy ate they ate together, for he would have nothing that he could not share with the dog, even to apples and oranges; and the dog, no matter how hungry he might be, if you gave him something blocks away, he would carry it and lay it at his master's feet.

When he was twelve years old the boy could say truthfully that there had not been a day in ten years that they had not seen each other some time between the rising and setting of the sun. If the boy travelled by land or sea, the dog went by the same conveyance, and, if the boy could have his way, in the same carriage, car, or stateroom. The dog's whole life, from puphood to old age, had been spent in the boy's com-

pany, and never a cuff or a kick had he received. Is it any wonder, then, that the dog loved the lad?

One day—the first in all his life—he missed his little master. All day he hunted, searched, and waited for him, and all night those watching in the sick-room could hear him whining, which is only a dog's way of weeping, and when they passed out near the garden porch they could hear him walking, walking up and down, up and down, precisely as a human being would walk, and, I make no doubt, he suffered the same. Surely never was sorrow seen plainer in human eyes than in the anxious eyes of this devoted old dog.

The servants went tiptoe and conversed in stage whisperings. When they had outgrown the fear and dread of death that seemed to hover about "Brownwood," they spent long hours discussing the dog. They fed him regularly twice a day, and though no one of them had seen him eat, they believed he did eat, for all the solid food disappeared—all the bones were buried somewhere.

The pointer wasted day by day. The coachman said flippantly that the dog had spring fever. The gardener called it distemper, but old Auntie, the colored cook, said it was "totin' of his trouble" that made the old dog look "so po' an' mis'able like."

At the end of a fortnight he had lost all interest in his surroundings. If he lay in the shade of a shrub and the shadow shifted, he would not stir, but would lie for hours in the broiling sun rather than move. Sometimes, hearing a strange footstep, he would start up, look, listen, and then fall down again. Then he would take a long, deep breath, blow it out suddenly with a sigh, and lie perfectly still.

The robins rioted in the tulip-trees, the bluebirds built in the maples, and the woodpecker hammered away at the dead limb on the big sycamore down by the river, while the old dog lay under the lilac bush, listless, listening for his little master's footsteps. So the pointer passed the spring days, but of his nights and how he got through them no one knew. They knew he slept, if he slept at all, in his favorite corner in the garden porch, but they knew not how often through the long, lonely night, when tired of his bed he got up and walked, and when weary of walking lay down again.

One day Baltyne faced the Doctor in the hall. "Is he going?" he asked, almost demanded.

"Yes," was the answer, and it entered Baltyne's heart like a sword-thrust.

It was very still all about the big house that night, save for the smothered sobbing of a woman away off somewhere among the cushions where the lights burned low. But if any of the watchers passed out

back, they heard the steady click, click, click, click of the old dog's nails on the floor of the garden porch, like the measured ticking of the great clock in the hall, as he walked the hours away: up and down, up and down in the darkness, all alone.

At last the time was come. Hope had died with yesterday. The medicine bottles had been put aside. The nurse sat down, like the Doctor, to wait.

Often at intervals, during that day, the dying boy asked after his dog. Along in the afternoon he raised his head, and in his delirium called the dog, and instantly the pointer was at the window. For hours he had been walking, unobserved by the anxious watchers inside, up and down the narrow veranda that ran along the side of the boy's bedroom. At the sound of his master's voice he stood up and beat the window with his front feet. At the sight of him the boy seemed to forget his suffering and, smiling, begged them to let the dog in. Baltyne—big, brave Baltyne, with tears washing down his wind-browned face—looked at the door and the Doctor nodded. Then Baltyne opened the door that led to the little veranda and the dog glided in. His whole frame quivered as he entered the room, and as he caught sight of the boy he uttered a little, teetering whine that grew until he reached the bed. As the boy wound his arms around the dog's neck the whine swelled into a cry,—not a bark nor a growl, nor yet a melancholy howl that a dog will do away in the dark,—a sobbing cry, not unlike that which came from the other side of the bed where the boy's mother was kneeling. Almost immediately the boy became calm and sank into a sort of stupor that was like sleep. When he had closed his eyes, Baltyne lifted the old dog tenderly and put him outside the room. At the door the dog turned his head, looked back at the bed, and uttered a low, quivering cry,—that was all.

When the door was closed he resumed his walk, up and down, up and down along the narrow veranda.

That night the boy slept as he had not slept for weeks. The Doctor was surprised to find him fresher and stronger the next morning. He got out his bottles and began to help the boy, who continued to show some signs of improvement. He slept again in the afternoon, and on waking asked for the dog. The meeting between the little master and his mute friend was marked by the same mutual happiness, though neither was affected as on the previous day. The dog went out quietly this time. Like the boy, he had grown stronger.

The Doctor gave the family a little hope, and that night Mrs. Baltyne slept.

After a night's rest she rose somewhat refreshed and went out while

the house was yet quiet. As she passed out under the great trees she saw the old dog dragging himself up the hill. When he saw her he picked up a nest that had been torn from a tulip-tree by the night-wind, brought it and put it down at her feet, and then fell down to rest. In the nest, rain-drenched, were two half-naked robins. "So like you, poor old dog," said his mistress, laying a hand lightly on the pointer's head.

From where she sat resting on a rustic seat she could see, away down by the swimming-pool, a little mound, where the wet leaves had been lately disturbed.

The next morning they missed the old dog, and Mrs. Baltyne, remembering her early morning experience of the day before, went down to the pool, and there she found the old dog hiding and hoarding like a miser to the last.

At the end of a month the boy was able to be wheeled down to the pool. The old dog romped out ahead, and when the nurse arrived with the invalid, followed by the parents, the old dog tore into the leaves, barking. "Here, Master," he was trying to say, "see, I have eaten nothing. Here, where we have feasted so often together, have I cached all my bones, waiting, waiting for you. It was hard—I was hungry sometimes, but I knew you'd come." And then, as if to set example, he began gnawing a fresh bone, for he *was* hungry.

Presently the Doctor joined them.

"What was it, Doctor," asked Mrs. Baltyne, "that came so near killing our boy?"

"The fever."

"And what was it that saved him to us when hope had gone?"

"The dog," said the honest old Doctor.



ENTHRONED

BY CHARLES MCILVAINE

LOVE whispered, "Shall I stay?"
Then flew away
And came again another day;
When, laughing, "Shall I come?"
He left me dumb;
For Love is ever frolicsome.
I said, "My heart, of Love beware,"
But found Love calmly sitting there.

PISCATOR AND THE PERI

By Henry Wysham Lanier



I.

THE train stopped at a grassy road that meandered over the hillside and ended at the railroad track.

"Gardiner's, sir," said the porter, grabbing up the big bundle of fishing-rods and the hand-bag, and hurrying towards the door. Piscator stepped out into the meadow and looked curiously about him: ahead the baggage-man was tumbling his duffle out into the long grass; around were open fields with not a living creature in sight.

"Nobody to meet me, apparently," said he.

"House is right behind those trees, just a step. Thank you, sir, thank you, sir"—and the porter swung himself on the moving car.

It seemed safe enough to leave his belongings, so Piscator deposited his rods in the railroad ditch with the other pieces and started out into the golden afternoon.

The air had the peculiar clarity of summer in the far north. Without noticing the temperature, he felt alive, brisk, invigorated; he walked in long strides, whistling a lively tune. The afternoon sun, about to drop behind the western hills, cast a mellow radiance upon the crest of the steep mountain east of the river and the gnarled and twisted gray ghosts of trees that waved gaunt arms on the burned-over slopes.

Piscator presently reached the top of the slight incline, and the squat little house became clearly visible. He stopped whistling and looked more thoughtful. He was, to tell the truth, not a little excited. Though an ardent angler, this was the first time he had come within range of the lordly salmon of the sea. And then there was another Reason.

As he passed the wind-battered old birches he suddenly beheld this latter Cause before him. It occupied a rocking-chair on the Gardiner porch, fresh and trim and charming and different from anything else in the world—just as his memory had so often pictured. Piscator's eyes got brighter as he looked. He had tracked her and her father for over a week now, ever since he had learned by chance, from a talkative clerk in a New York sporting-goods store, that the General was starting on a salmon campaign. They had moved on frequently, but Piscator had hung doggedly on the trail for a thousand miles. He could have

overtaken them at the coast, but that had seemed really too much, so he had sped around to the north by a coasting steamer and caught the train back, reaching Gardiner's eight hours after the arrival of his quarry.

Now he was confronted by the thought of what the Peri would say when he presented himself. Had she forgiven him for that miserable failure to keep his appointment? And, worse still, that night! What *would* she do! It did seem rather outrageous now, looking at it in cold blood. The fact was, she had plainly said he had better not see her any more. And on top of this to have dogged her footsteps in this way!

For an instant his courage oozed away, and had there been any avenue of escape he would have turned back, even at this eleventh hour. But this was out of the question, so he braced himself mentally and, making a detour so as to approach unobserved, walked rapidly towards the house.

II.

"WELL, of all the people!" said the Peri.

Piscator grinned.

"Whatever brought you here?" she demanded.

"Fish—in my blood. It's the time of the year: you see them, you smell them, you feel them. And then the newspapers and magazines insist on printing stuff about them till a man can't stand it. I was rushed to death with work, but I found it was easier to get away from the office than from the idea."

"But where's your baggage? And there's only one train a day," persisted the Peri.

"Oh, I came the other way."

"The other way?"—the tone was ominous. "The other way from *what*?"

"Well—er," stammered Piscator guiltily. "Most people come here from the south, I'm told."

"Oh!"

He felt the necessity of taking a stand. "What streak of good luck brought you here just now?" he asked unblushingly.

She still looked severe; but there really are worse traits in a devoted man than utter transparency, and the corners of her mouth relaxed slightly.

"I don't know about the luck, but Daddy is responsible. He's worse than ever." Despite herself she could hardly keep from smiling. "You seem determined," she went on, "to complete leaving undone what you promised to do by doing what you ought not to do." His eager protest was dismissed with a wave of the hand. "No, you needn't tell me that long story again. I heard it once, and even supposing it all true, which implies a superhuman degree of credulity on my part, I will not admit

that anything can excuse a man for not meeting an appointment with me. Besides, that's past. What I want to know is——"

Piscator drew a long breath. "Do you really want to know why I came?"

She was looking away from him now and did not answer.

"Do you want to know?" he repeated, coming nearer.

His heart beat fast, and the blood began to throb in his temples so that he felt dizzy. He tried to speak, but his lips were so dry that no sound came. He took another step forward. Could it be? Was this the moment he had waited for, and should he risk everything on a bold cast now? He strove to get himself in hand.

She turned, and—with a briskness that fairly made him gasp—"Why you came? Oh, for the salmon. Yes, you told me that at first."

Piscator was speechless.

"But I'm afraid your ardor is destined to disappointment," she went on loudly. "They all declare the river is too high or too low or too warm or too something, and that poor little grilse there represents the combined efforts of five stalwart men—not to mention a lady in a tight sweater with horizontal stripes four inches wide, and a skirt over her waders not much wider. Daddy didn't seem discouraged; but I doubt if he's going to have much better luck. Why, here he is now. Any fish to-day, Daddy?"

"I had one splendid rise," said the General solemnly. "A big fellow—twenty pounds at least. But I didn't get him."

Piscator had been dreading this moment. He shook hands with the old warrior and plunged into the explanation which must not explain. "I've been looking forward for years to a bout with the salmon up here, General, but I didn't expect such good fortune in the matter of companions."

"Yes, yes," said the General. "He came to a Jock Scott of my own tying, on a number six double sproat."

"Indeed? It seems like quite a coincidence," went on Piscator laboriously, "that we should meet again way up here in the wilderness, don't it? Still, salmon-fishing in these rivers is a matter of exact dates, and I fancy you must have been reading the same guide-books from which I got my facts."

"Yes, yes," replied the General absently. "It was in what they call the Red Bank pool. I must have cast over that exact spot fifty times. And at last, up he rolled lazily, till I could see the whole of him—as long as my arm he was, and as broad as a breakfast plate. A fresh-run fish too."

He looked impressively at Piscator, who was trying to adjust his expression to the occasion, somewhat hampered by the knowledge that the Peri was smiling wickedly. But Piscator was too good a fisherman

to lack persistence. He broke in on the old gentleman's fond reminiscences again: "It is certainly a most pleasant surprise" (the Peri's eyebrows rounded into an affectation of astonishment) "and coincidence that we should reach here the same day."

"Yes," interrupted the Peri meaningly, "I didn't mention it: we did arrive to-day."

"And I only hope," continued Piscator desperately, "that we shall all get what we've come so far after."

He was pleased to see that she colored slightly at this.

"The gentlemen in the house seem somewhat discouraged," remarked the General with a sort of pitying finality, "but I shall be at the Red Bank pool at daybreak to-morrow."

"Meanwhile it's time to dress for supper," observed his daughter.

Tired-looking Mrs. Gardiner appeared in the doorway, greeting Piscator with profuse apologies for the absence of "the boys" upon his arrival, and drawing from him an impromptu and involved explanation of how he happened to come from the wrong direction. The General and Peri went upstairs leaving him floundering, the former adding on the way various significant details of the momentous experience which had befallen him. As they reached their floor the General seemed to be struck with a new idea.

"By the way," said he, nodding his head downward, "it does seem a little strange that he is off on another fishing trip so soon. I wonder if he's sick. The young business men I used to know thought themselves lucky to get away one week in the year. Did he say anything about being unwell?" The General's eyes gleamed; he had two passions besides the Peri: fish and homœopathy. He now scented a "case" from afar, and revelled in the thought of an excursion through his little black medicine-chest.

"He said he had fish in his blood," replied the Peri demurely.

"God bless my soul!" exclaimed the General.

III.

DESPITE Piscator's determination to wait for his friends, he presently found himself, under Mrs. Gardiner's persistent guidance, entering the little dining-room, which seemed full of people already. He was surprised too to observe that apparently most of his fellow-sportsmen were accompanied by their wives. In the natural embarrassment of a retiring man coming upon so many strangers unexpectedly, he was slipping into his seat as inconspicuously as possible, when, to his astonishment, he was addressed by the lady at his side:

"Why, I really believe you have forgotten me!" said she loudly, yet with a distinctly coquettish tone and air.

The lilac ribbons and frizzed hair brought no enlightenment to

Piscator's memory. As he looked into her pale blue eyes and desperately racked his brain there was a tantalizingly-vague response, but when or where or how he had met the lady were blanks. The situation called for action, however, so he had hardly begun upon this mental search when a smile of recognition beamed upon his face.

"Forgotten you," said he. "How could I?" This was a little stronger than he had intended, and he could feel every matron at the table prick up her ears; but at least it saved his face with the lilac ribbons. There was a gratified little gurgle.

"I didn't *see* how you *could*," said she in a more confidential tone, "after that charming evening—and our romantic adventure."

Piscator laughed knowingly. "You see, I didn't dream of meeting anybody I knew. And then you have changed, I think." He surveyed her critically, whereat two pink spots appeared on her cheeks.

"So everyone says," she replied. "I hope it's not for the worse."

Piscator was getting worried, but he did his duty. "My eyes and my memory contradict each other on that point," he said in a low tone.

To his great relief a momentary diversion was caused just then by the arrival of the tea; there followed the replenishing of his neighbor's supply of lamb; then some rolls were passed; and in this interval he was enabled to become sufficiently absorbed in the business of food himself to make decent a temporary silence.

This "Brer Fox" policy soon had its reward. The chair at the head of the table was taken by a two-hundred-pound Doctor, Bragg by name. Most of his time was occupied, when not plunging into the river in wading trousers like a buffalo bull, in the attempt to get or keep a joke on somebody. Combining a big pervasive presence with an utter disregard for anybody else's feelings or reserves, he usually dominated the situation. After a volley of scattering hits around the table, he now caught the eye of the lady with the lilac ribbons. He at once assumed a solemnly monitorial expression; shaking his forefinger at her, he said gravely,—

"Ah, Mrs. Simpkins, I fear I shall have to write to the Barrister-at-law."

To Piscator's horror the lady bridled and simpered, apparently unconscious of the smile that rippled round the table. "You need do no such thing, thank you, Doctor Bragg," said she.

"I fear I must," rejoined the big man. "I'm afraid I must telegraph him to come on and take care of you."

"I don't need anybody to take care of me, not even Mr. Simpkins."

"I should have said to take care of us," continued the Doctor. "Why, my good friend Wilson hasn't had any appetite since you arrived." He pointed to the empty chair on her right. "Nowadays, you see, he doesn't even come to the table."

"Nonsense," said Mrs. Simpkins; "he's down there in the river, probably."

"In the river!" exclaimed the Doctor in horror. "No, I don't think it has come to that—yet."

"Oh, you know what I mean," retorted the lady. "He's just too interested to stop fishing, that's all that's the matter with him."

"Ah, so he pretends. But the real truth is, he couldn't eat a mouthful in such an unnerving situation. Too bad, too bad. Why, I've known Billy Wilson for twenty-five years, and I wouldn't have had such a thing happen for a hundred dollars. And he came up here to rest and get strong!"

"Pooh!" said Mrs. Simpkins, half convinced.

"It's easy for you to take it that way," said the Doctor sadly, "but it's a more serious thing for some people."

During all this Piscator had looked stonily ahead of him, consuming tea and lamb ravenously. It was not necessary to turn, however, to have all the situation stamped unforgettably upon his mind: the Doctor, barely able to restrain an exultant roar; Mrs. Bragg, disapproving but helpless; poor Mrs. Simpkins, uncertain and inadequate, but tremulously and excitedly conscious that she held the centre of the stage; all the rest of the company in a broad grin, and himself—but he always drew down the curtain upon his imagination when it came to that. He remembered the lady now: she had come to New York with the Barrister-at-law, to whom he was under hospitable obligations, recommended to him by a Halifax correspondent. He had gone out of his way to be agreeable to the Simpkinses, and coming from the opera one night the Barrister had become separated from them. He had escorted the lady to their lodgings and waited a couple of hours for Simpkins to turn up; finally he had had to call a cab and take the hysterical bride on a tour of inquiry, till the missing husband was found in care of the Tenderloin police. He remembered it all: she had been rather a pill then, but now— Really, she must be a little touched.

He rose rather abruptly, without waiting for dessert. In the hall he met the General and the Peri.

"What, through already?" said the former. "You haven't got a fishing appetite."

"No, not yet," said Piscator. "A pipe beats pie just at present."

He went out to smoke on the side porch while the others entered the dining-room in time to hear Dr. Bragg call out:

"Really, Mrs. Simpkins, I don't know what to say: here's my unfortunate friend Wilson not decently buried yet, when a new victim appears; already far gone at that."

Piscator had smoked himself into peaceful good-humor again when the Peri appeared in the doorway. After a moment's hesitation she

yielded to his urgency and sat down. Somehow, though, she radiated a coolness and distance against which he struggled in vain; try as he might, he could not bring the conversation back to the exciting personal status of the afternoon, when all sorts of bewildering possibilities had been but a step away. In consequence, the talk was commonplace and desultory, and he felt her getting farther and farther away. At last she openly stifled a yawn.

"I'm sleepy," she announced, rising. "And, really, you're not very amusing this evening. I think I'll go up, for Daddy will surely start out in the middle of the night."

"I'm sorry I don't entertain you," Piscator answered with wounded dignity, but she paid no attention.

"Good-night." Then, turning to go, "I didn't know you had friends here," she remarked casually.

"I thought I had one, but I don't feel so sure." He could not see her face in the dusk, so it was impossible to tell the effect of this. But she replied quickly:

"Dear me, you needn't doubt it. I can set your mind quite at rest. She took the whole dining-room into her confidence about the red roses you sent her. And then how was it: was Mr. Simpkins hunting for you and her, or were you looking for him? I only remember the police stations."

Before Piscator could decide whether to be violently angry or to lay hands upon her, she had vanished inside.

He smoked in solitary gloom for an hour, got elaborate directions from one of the boys and the General about the pools on the river, dug out his fishing-rod and wading things, and went to bed, vowing vengeance upon poor Mrs. Simpkins, yet trusting optimistically to the morrow to set everything straight. Anyhow, he reflected, as he dozed off, the cranks of these unaccountable women could not interfere with the salmon; all the men except the General and himself were going after trout, so there was a clear field, and the thought of the coming battle in the swift water was very pleasant.

IV.

It was scarcely day when Piscator descended next morning, garbed for the water and carrying the new English rod he had imported for this expedition. Faithful Michael, heavy-eyed but dispensing bread and butter and coffee to the early anglers, met him downstairs and attended to the wants of his inner man, giving him also a package of lunch to take along. He had reached the gate when Michael came panting after him.

"Please, sorr, I was to give you this," and he fished out a letter from the depths of his dilapidated coat.

Piscator knew there was only one person in the house who had anything to write to him. He put the little pale-blue envelope tenderly in his pocket and walked gayly off, leaving the bewildered Michael gazing at the first dollar he had ever called his own.

The minute he had reached a safe distance he tore open the envelope. The missive began abruptly in an awkward, angular writing:

"You must not mind the Doctor's nonsense. He is rough and does not understand how sensitive people feel about some things. But it is all right when people understand each other, isn't it? I could see you were embarrassed this evening and I'm afraid you didn't finish your supper! Never mind. I will see you when you come back from fishing.

"Yours,
"LILY S."

Piscator had once for a few hours enjoyed the acquaintance of a Chesapeake Bay pilot with the gift of language—when the wind suddenly jumped from fair to a nor'west gale and the barkentine found herself caught just outside the Capes on an ebb tide. The few inadequate fragments he had retained now came to his aid, and after a rapid excursus among these ruins he felt somewhat relieved. His first impulse was to destroy the note, but on second thought he put it back into his pocket: he would see Mrs. Simpkins on his return, he assured himself, and have it out with her once for all. Lunatic or whatever, this was past a joke, and he must put a stop to it.

By this time his energetic strides had brought him to the first ford, and the sight of the river drove every other idea out of his head. He redoubled his pace, and in half an hour his trembling fingers were fastening a gaudy, double-hooked Jock Scott to the tail of a nine-foot leader, above the rapids by the upper pool, two miles to the north.

There be few enthusiasms comparable to that of the eager angler turned loose upon his first salmon river. At six o'clock Piscator wondered how he was going to be able to tear himself away at the end of two weeks, and he snicked the points off three hooks on the stones in as many consecutive back casts while he strove to decide if it would be fair to his partner back in the city to stay longer.

At one o'clock, however, the wire-edge of his ardor had become a trifle dulled. In the first place, he had not had a single rise, for all his seven hours of faithful work; then the unaccustomed labor of wielding the big double-handed rod was beginning to tell on his back and arms; and, finally, he had stepped over his waders and was a little shivery and uncomfortable.

His slight lunch and a pipe somewhat restored him, and with renewed energy he set to once more. From a hilltop he had spied the General, still persistently troubling the waters of the Red Bank pool, so

he made a half mile detour and struck the stream again below, fishing every foot that was at all possible.

Towards later afternoon, when he had grown really discouraged and the casting had become merely a mechanical and monotonous duty with no hope of result, he came to a long and narrow deep pool, full of brush on the farther side, where the dirt bank rose abruptly five or six feet, and leading by a broad, open stretch of gentle riffles into a larger expanse of deep water below.

He fished the entire length of the upper pool conscientiously, and had almost reached the tail of it when his heart gave a great thump and stopped as he became aware of half a dozen splendid salmon lying motionless out beyond the middle. Cautiously retreating, he dropped the flies deftly over them. Again and again this was repeated, with no result. He changed the cast to a small Black Dose and Fiery Brown. These gave place to a Butcher and a Nondescript—and so on through the entire contents of a plethoric fly-book, exhausting numberless combinations of size and color. The only visible effect of all this ingenuity and persistence upon those exasperating creatures was to cause them to dart forward a foot when he bungled his cast.

Piscator laid down his rod and mopped his dripping brow. As he did so the fish nearest him changed their position and revealed a monster lying motionless beyond. Piscator looked upon that fish in hot wrath and longing. Then, as he gazed, Satan entered into his heart—and instead of repelling the foul fiend he held out both hands in welcome. He recalled a dastardly poacher's trick, technically known as "jigging;" and with the recollection he fell.

Wading out to shore, he retired from the brink and made his way circuitously to the shallow water below. Cautiously fording this, he clambered up the bank and with infinite pains wormed his way, flat on his belly, under the tangled alders till he reached the open space he had marked in the bushes. Slowly, a foot at a time, he pushed the rod ahead of him and crept towards the brink till he could see his unsuspecting quarry a few feet farther upstream. Working the line out easily, he got the flies on the other side of the fish and let them sink to the bottom; then, slowly drawing them in until they almost touched the dull-brown backs, he gave a quick jerk. The first attempt failed, likewise the second, and the fish became uneasy, darting hither and thither, so that he had to wait some time for them to settle down again. On the third trial, however, the cast settled down right against the old grandfather of the school, and he was so sure of success that he struck with all his might. Then things began to happen.

Before he could rise to his feet there was a volcanic upheaval of the quiet water; high into the air came a yard of gleaming silver, alive and fighting mad in every inch of its curving bow. The reel set up a scream

as he touched the surface again, and the next thing Piscator knew he was over the bank and up to his armpits in the river, with the salmon a hundred feet upstream and heading for the sunken brush.

Piscator hastily floundered across to the opposite flat shore. Realizing that another moment would probably afford the big fellow a chance to take a turn around some root or branch and end the matter ere it well began, he gave him the butt sternly. The strain of the great eighteen-foot greenheart was too much, even for the wild thing at the other end. It turned in a twinkling and sped the other way almost quicker than the eye could follow it. One great dorsal fin ripped the surface as the fish left the pool, took the swift water at a single dash, and made for the deep hole beyond. Piscator had hardly time to adjust himself to these tactics when he found that a hundred and twenty yards were off his reel, and the salmon had not wavered or hesitated on his straightaway run. It was clearly a case for sprinting, so off he set at full speed after the runaway, thanking fortune that the bank was clear.

He had a wild dash and scramble over the stones, and then had to wade another place that just missed swimming-depth before he got the fish in hand again. But this pyrotechnic display, or something, had tired the big salmon. He jumped twice more and fought savagely for a while, yet in fifteen minutes Piscator saw that victory was in his grasp.

He urged him steadily in, the heavy rod almost dislocating his left wrist, while he stood ready with the gaff in his right. Driving it home, he dragged the salmon out on shore with a whoop of triumph. To his surprise this was echoed from behind. Coming over the meadows he beheld the portly figure of the General accompanied by the Peri.

His anxiety lest they should have seen the "jigging" was uppermost in his mind. Indeed, after the first flush of battle the affair left but a poor taste in the mouth. He hastily stooped and removed the hook from the fish's side, where it was securely imbedded.

"Did you see him jump at first?" he asked excitedly.

"No," said the General, "but I saw you jump off the bank. Casting from this side, weren't you?" His face betrayed open and frank envy; it was too serious a matter with him to admit of altruism without a strain; but he met the situation nobly: "What a beauty." He took out a pocket scales. "Twenty-three and a quarter. Let me congratulate you, sir. You have broken the record here for this season."

The Peri was to one side and did not say much. Piscator turned rather guiltily to be sure that her face was not an accusing one. She was stooping down behind a little clump of grass.

"Did you drop something?" asked Piscator.

"No—I have it," she replied contradictorily, straightening up with her hand closing about some small object. "What a perfectly beautiful creature," she exclaimed; and then she began to talk, volubly and clev-

erly, as if she would never stop. Piscator was first surprised, then delighted, for he took this as a sign of reconciliation, and though she had, of course, been absurdly in the wrong, he was too deeply satisfied at having things right to wish for any explanation or apology on her part.

Before they reached the house, however, he had some doubts as to the correctness of his impression, for she was even more elusive than on the previous night, and though her tongue was hardly still a moment, she paid no attention to his repeated covert allusions and meaning glances.

The salmon created a sensation at Gardiner's, and Piscator, to his great embarrassment, was kept busy for some time answering questions as to its capture. When he could get free the Peri had disappeared, and at supper the General announced she had a headache.

Piscator decided not to go out early next day, but to see her at breakfast and scheme for a word in private afterwards. The Peri, however, did not come down even at late breakfast, so, after waiting around till he could stand it no longer, Piscator went to the river. At lunch it was the same story. He was amazed to notice that Mrs. Simpkins, to whom he had been pointedly rude, paid all her attention to the General; but this had only a casual interest for him under the circumstances; after the dreary meal was over he once more sought comfort in the "liquid refreshment" of wading.

Returning late, he was thunderstruck to hear that the Peri and her father were to leave the place the next morning. She was not feeling at all well, the story went, and thought the air did not agree with her. The General was distinctly grumpy and would give him no satisfaction beyond gruffly assuring him that the girl was all right—"only notional, as always;" so the poor, bewildered gentleman went to bed, but not to sleep.

He rose early, haggard and unrefreshed, and took a walk. To his delight the Peri appeared at the breakfast-table looking entirely robust and healthy. Once when their eyes met she colored deeply and turned away, but she was careful to give him no chance of anything but public conversation either at the meal or afterwards, pretending to be absorbed in packing until it was time to go on the train. The whole establishment saw them off, and Piscator was merely one of the jolly crowd, which adjured the General to come back next year and try his luck again, and openly bewailed the impending loss of the Peri.

She told him good-by with the same cheerful impartiality bestowed upon the others, preserving this Sphinx-like reserve until the train actually started. Then, as Piscator raised a woe-begone face towards her window from the side of the track, she leaned out, smiled ravishingly upon him, handed him an envelope,—with a look which he did

not understand till too late,—and whispered, “We’re going after black bass.”

Then she was gone.

On the way back the men were discussing the abrupt flitting. “Pshaw,” said the Doctor presently. “I know all about the thing and I’ll tell you now. It’s very simple, and you fellows would have seen it if you had any eyes: Mrs. Simpkins was so hot on the General’s trail that his daughter simply got scared and packed him off. They made a bargain, Michael tells me, that if he would leave at once, she would go for a month’s more fishing with him somewhere else.”

They all laughed, and went out for the day.

Piscator sought a secluded place and opened the envelope, which was addressed to him in the Peri’s handwriting. It contained not a word from her: merely the note to himself from Mrs. Simpkins and another startlingly similar one in the same chirography to the General.

He whistled loud and long. “So that’s what she picked up down by the river. By Jove!”

And then, with a glimmer of hope in his heart, he got out his books and began to study the question of the black bass and its most famous habitats.



MISTRESS MARCH

BY HILTON R. GREER

YOU'RE a crabbed crone and crusty,
Mistress March!

Vibrant is your voice and gusty
As you sweep down highways dusty,
Swaying with abandon lusty
Brittle boughs of oak and larch;
Yet we hail you herald trusty,
Mistress March!

For, despite your storm and stinging,
Mistress March,
Hints you bear of buds upspringing,
Silver sounds of wild birds singing,
Flash of swallows, fleetly winging
Where the blue skies overarch.
Bless you for your message-bringing,
Mistress March!

TOLD AFTER DINNER

By Ella Middleton Tybout



"IT was a curious career, certainly," said the Doctor, as he sipped his coffee.

"I should think, Doctor," observed the Senator, "that as your profession must bring you so often into contact with the seamy side of life such things would cease to impress you very much."

"Yes," said the Member of Congress, "even the softest heart must become hardened in time, you know."

"You and I, Doctor," remarked the Journalist, "see every type of human nature as we earn our daily bread. But it's all very interesting, isn't it?—as a psychological study, I mean."

The four men had been dining together, and had reached the stage of coffee and conversation.

"I am hardened somewhat," replied the Doctor slowly; "it is, as you say, Senator, the natural result of my profession, but, you see, I recognized her under the paint and powder as someone I knew years ago,—in the days when people only sent for me because no one else was available."

"A woman with a past," said the Member, producing his cigar-case; "the old story, I suppose."

"I was at the theatre when she fainted," said the Journalist thoughtfully; "somehow I couldn't forget the incident. And so you knew her?"

"Twenty years ago," returned the Doctor, "when I first hung out my sign here in Washington, I knew her very well."

"When men reach years of discretion," interrupted the Member, laughing, "they do not always care to recall events of twenty years past."

"It seems but yesterday to me," said the Senator; "but please go on, Doctor, you interest me."

"No doubt she had been quite pretty," said the Journalist critically. "I could see traces of beauty left, although, of course, she was worn and faded."

"She had dimples," said the Doctor reflectively,—"I remember them particularly because she was always laughing,—and blue eyes with a smile in them, such as any healthy, happy young girl ought to have, only at that time I thought it remarkable."

"In short," interpolated the Journalist, "you were hard hit just then."

The Senator carefully made rings of smoke, looking through and beyond them with an abstracted expression, while the Member of Congress absently sketched a profile on the table with the handle of his spoon.

"What color was her hair?" he asked abruptly. "You must not leave that to the imagination, Doctor."

"Brown," replied the Doctor, "dark brown and curly, but in the sunshine it turned to gold in places. Yes, I was hard hit just then, and looking back on it I don't wonder."

"And she?"

"She was already engaged; her mother told me about it one day. I think she wanted to warn me not to poach on another fellow's preserves. He lived in the West, it seemed, and was coming on to marry her in the winter."

"What part of the West?" inquired the Senator.

"California, I think. It has been so long ago that I've forgotten some of the details. Did I say they lived opposite me? Well, when they came home that fall, after being away all summer, I thought her prettier than ever. Although I did not go as often to the house as I should have liked to do, I looked out my office window a good deal, and I noticed that she had begun to watch anxiously for the postman. I couldn't help wondering if the fellow in the West was neglecting her."

"Probably," said the Senator, "it was not *his* letters that interested her, after all."

"She was to be married in January," continued the Doctor, "and about Christmas they gave a ball. I remember just how she looked in her white frock, dancing the Virginia reel."

"Up the middle and down again," hummed the Journalist, beating time with his finger.

"Just so. Well, that night she eloped with a man she had met in the summer. She left a note asking her mother to break it gently to the fellow in the West."

"Poor devil! it was rather hard lines for him," said the Journalist sympathetically.

"No doubt he forgot her and married someone else," said the Member tentatively.

"He might have married, but that does not prove he forgot her," said the Senator. "Did you never see her again, Doctor, until the other night?"

"Once, in London, ten years ago. I went with some friends to see a famous danseuse; it was about the beginning of the skirt-

dancing era, you know. When she appeared, in spite of the French name on the programme and the calcium lights, I recognized Molly Hilton."

"Molly Hilton," repeated the Senator mechanically, "yes. So that was her name,—Molly Hilton."

"Upon my word," said the Journalist, "it sounds like a romance. Of course, you went behind at the close of the act."

"Yes," said the Doctor, "I pencilled 'for auld lang syne' on my card and dispatched it to her. She sent for me to come to her dressing-room and dismissed her maid. Then she told me her story. The details don't matter now; it was the usual thing, and only what she might have expected, of course, but she was rather bitter about it. I couldn't blame her, looking at it from her point of view."

"There are two sides to every question," interrupted the Member. "Perhaps you did not hear the whole story."

"Yes," agreed the Journalist, "there may have been extenuating circumstances; you should suspend judgment, Doctor, that's only fair."

"I judged from the facts themselves," returned the Doctor. "Shall I repeat them?"

"I should like to hear everything," said the Senator.

"I don't think," said the Member of Congress, "that the details would be very interesting."

"When you saw her in London," said the Senator slowly, "how did she look? Was she satisfied with her life? I am curious, you see."

"She was a woman who had lived," said the Doctor gravely, "and, in living, learned all that life can teach of bitterness."

"Well," said the Journalist, "I suppose that was the natural result of her experience."

"The inevitable result," replied the Doctor. "I could see that the excitement of her life stimulated her day by day, but I could also see that it was killing her."

"And did you not warn her?" said the Senator. "Did you make no effort to induce her to live more quietly? You should have——"

He checked himself abruptly.

"I did what I could," said the Doctor, "but she laughed at me; 'a short life and a merry one,' she said, 'and don't think of what may come afterwards.'"

"I tried to persuade her to return to America with my wife and me,—to come back to Washington. I told her I could get her employment in one of the departments of the government where she could live quietly and earn enough to be comfortable, but she refused my every suggestion, insisting that she was perfectly well and happy as she

was. She invited me to go to supper at her rooms after the performance and judge for myself of her prosperity. She was called then for the second act, but as she left the room she turned and spoke to me.

" 'Tom,' she said in her old, soft voice, 'I didn't mean to be rude, and I know you intended it for the best, but I can't take your advice,—don't ask it of me. I couldn't live in Washington after all that has happened, I really couldn't. I'm all right, indeed I am, and making money fast, and—— I'm glad to have seen you, Tom, but don't recall old days; I want to forget if I can. Think of me, sometimes, please. Good-by.' "

The Doctor paused for a moment as he knocked the ashes off his cigar.

"I remember every word of that last sentence," he said; "somehow I never forgot it. I never shall."

"Did you go to the supper?" inquired the Journalist, getting back to the facts of the case.

"Yes," replied the Doctor, "I went. I was sorry afterwards. There were a lot of young fools who fancied they knew it all, and a few men who knew enough to hide their knowledge. There were some women, not many,—we won't discuss them,—and Molly Hilton. There was a lot of light and glitter; I did not stay very long."

"I suppose," suggested the Journalist, "that the flowing bowl was not lacking."

"There were toasts," said the Doctor, "and speeches by men who fancied themselves witty. They proposed her health constantly, and she danced for them. Finally they took her slipper and filled it with champagne, and the greatest fool there drank from it. Then I came away. And she liked it,—that was the worst of all,—she liked it."

"Such an existence," remarked the Journalist with a knowing air, "must necessarily blunt a woman's sensibility sooner or later."

The Senator turned suddenly to the Doctor.

"And you left without seeing her again, I suppose," he said. "Did it never occur to you that she was only waiting to be urged to come home; that she must have been heartsick for her own country and friends?"

"She had no friends here," said the Doctor quietly. "You forget the circumstances, I think. I was sailing in a few days, but I tried several times to see her again. Each time I was refused admittance."

"When a woman deliberately selects that sort of life," said the Member, "it is wasted energy to try and induce her to give it up."

"Very true," assented the Doctor, "but suppose she is driven to it, what then? What is your opinion of the man in the case?"

"No doubt," returned the Member, "he is no worse than the gen-

erality. There are skeletons in most closets, as you must know, Doctor."

"Yes," said the Journalist, "but the doors are securely locked, as a rule."

"When did you next see her?" inquired the Senator.

"Two weeks ago, at the vaudeville. She did a skirt-dancing turn on a globe, such as you have often seen. When she fainted I went to offer my services, and a woman back there told me about her. It is a pitiful tale of illness, want, and debt. Once started down-hill, it is curious how rapid the descent can be."

"Yes," agreed the Journalist, "and it is odd how many obliging people stand ready to step into our places when we fall out, and fill them better than we ever dreamed of doing."

"I took her home, to my house," resumed the Doctor, "and my wife nursed her, but she never rallied. Just at the last, however, she regained consciousness and said one word,—a man's name."

The Senator leaned forward with an expectant expression, while the Member of Congress complacently caressed his mustache.

"And the name was——" said the Journalist.

"Mine," said the Doctor quietly. "You see, I was bending over her when she opened her eyes, and she recognized me. It was quite natural. You are not going, Senator?"

But the Senator had remembered a pressing engagement, and so, it appeared, had the Member of Congress.

"A most interesting story, Doctor, and remarkably well told. It would write up famously," said the Journalist. "Have I your permission to use it as copy?"

But the Doctor was looking after his departing guests.

"I thought it just possible," he said absently, "owing to the similarity of names, and yet, I wonder——"

He turned suddenly to the Journalist.

"No," he said, "I'd rather you didn't publish, if you don't mind."

The Senator and the Member of Congress walked a few blocks together; then the latter, remarking that he really must go to work at his speech on the tariff question, turned off in the direction of his rooms, while the Senator walked slowly home.

The Member sat down at his desk and went carefully over the matter already prepared on the tariff.

"I wonder," he said aloud, "why he told that story to-night, whether it was accident or design. I wonder how much he knows. I wonder——"

He wrote several pages rapidly, which were consigned to the wastebasket when read, then sat absently fingering his pen, while the clock

on the mantel ticked monotonously on as the hands travelled over its face unnoticed.

"Oh, well," said the Member of Congress, rousing himself abruptly as the hour chimed, "it's all in a lifetime, I suppose."

After which he applied himself resolutely to his speech.

The Senator sat in his library and gazed into the fire. After a while he drew a bunch of keys from his pocket and unfastened a drawer in his writing-table; evidently it was not often used, for the lock was rusty.

He took out a small velvet case, and opening it gazed intently into the eyes which smiled up at him. The Senator's own eyes grew rather misty as he looked, and he passed his hand hastily across them. Something fell from the case, and he stooped to pick it up; it proved to be a ring of soft, brown hair, and he drew it gently through his fingers before replacing it.

The Senator closed the case and returned the picture to the drawer. Then he resumed his chair before the fire.

"Poor little Molly," he said at last, as he unfolded his newspaper, "poor little girl."

Then he found the editorial page and turned up the light.



HARP OF MY HEART

BY EDGAR FAWCETT

HARP of my heart, thy chords were still as death
Till breathed on by Love's breath.

Harp of my heart, it swept thee with no stress
Of sudden feverishness.

Harp of my heart, it stole to thee at first
As dews where meadows thirst.

Harp of my heart, erelong it haunted thee
With dreamiest minstrelsy.

Harp of my heart, it whelmed at last thy scope
With rich, tempestuous hope.

Harp of my heart, grand raptures it now brings
To thunder through thy strings!

RURAL AND VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT SOCIETIES

By Eben E. Rexford

Author of "Home Floriculture"

INDIVIDUAL effort is the great factor of success in an undertaking of this kind. The man who begins the work of improvement by clearing away the rubbish from his back yard and doing something to make the home grounds pleasant constitutes an improvement society of one, and what he does will be the object-lesson needed to prompt others to follow his example. The work of improvement must begin at the home. Any society which sets out to improve homes in general and neglects to do anything for the individual home is a failure from the start, because it overlooks the fact that general improvement can only result from individual effort brought to bear upon each home, instead of general effort expended on all homes. This is why improvement, like charity, should begin at home before it undertakes the broader work of the community.

It is the easiest thing in the world to get an improvement society started in almost any community if one earnest, enthusiastic person will take the matter in hand. This is especially the case at the present time, for enough of the work of such societies can be seen on all sides to convince any thoughtful person of the benefit growing out of them. It needs someone for a leader who is what we Westerners call a "hus-tler,"—a person who has the knack of organizing and directing individual effort in such a manner as to make it available and effective. If there is such a person in the community, and he—or she—has the amount of enthusiasm necessary to arouse public interest and create or stimulate a desire for beauty in everyday, practical life, there is no good reason why a local improvement society should not be organized in any community—there is nearly always need for it. Recognize this need fully, and bring it to the attention of others, then go to work at once in the formation of your society. Do not wait for next spring or next fall, but begin your work now, for there is always something that can be done, and there is no reason for deferring action to a special season or until such action may seem timely. All times, all seasons, are alike to such a society, whose work must go on during the entire year. Therefore get down to business as soon as possible, be the time

384 Rural and Village Improvement Societies

spring or summer, fall or winter. If you cannot work to advantage, you can plan for work, and a good plan to follow always enables a society to dispose of its work to the greatest advantage when working-time comes.

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Very much of the success of such a society depends upon individual effort as directed towards the improvement of the home grounds. Let one person fall to work in earnest in cleaning up and beautifying his place, and what he does will serve as an object-lesson to his neighbors and incite them to imitate his action. Enthusiasm is always contagious. Once get a community enthusiastically at work, either individually or as an organization, in the line of improvement, and success is assured, for enthusiasm will feed upon itself and grow as the work progresses. I have seen the proof of this in my own village, where an improvement society resulted from one man's attempt to beautify his home grounds. He accomplished so much in the right direction that others came to a realization of their own need and opportunity and followed his example. Soon they banded themselves together, and to-day they take intense pride and delight in carrying forward the good work.

The need of such a society in every community is apparent to anyone who will go about with his eyes open. He will see chances for improvement on every hand. He will soon discover them where he had not supposed they existed until he began to look for them. Observation will sharpen his vision in this respect, and he will soon come to the conclusion that the scope of an improvement society is a broad one, and one that enlarges as the work goes on.

It is not my intention to get down to definite details in this paper, which is more a plea for the formation of improvement societies than anything else, but I desire to call attention to some peculiar features of the work, and also to suggest some of the means and methods and materials which can be made use of in nearly all communities in the performance of it.

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The average village lot is deficient in shrubbery and trees, and what is true of the village lot is also true, to a considerable extent, of the country home, therefore what I have to say will apply with equal force to both. Nothing improves the appearance of the home more than good trees and fine shrubs. Perhaps the majority of our houses are not specially attractive in themselves, but give them a setting of "green things growing," and the eye is at once attracted by it, the house ceases to be the overpoweringly prominent feature of the place. It is an easy

matter to cover up a great deal of positive ugliness by a vine. It is just as easy to grow trees and shrubs in such a manner as to break up bare spaces and hide much that cannot be made beautiful in itself. Many a house cannot be remodelled into an attractive one, but the judicious use of vines upon its walls, and of trees and shrubs so planted as to relieve its angularities and lack of graceful lines, will make the place a pleasant one in spite of its drawbacks, because beauty is emphasized by making it prominent, and ugliness retreats to the background in proportion as beauty comes to the front. The eye is naturally attracted by the beauty of a tree or a shrub or a vine, and by using them liberally we draw attention away from less attractive things. It is one of the privileges of art to make its disposition of beauty so vivid and forceful that a study of it leads us to forget to look for unpleasant features. This is one of the truths which we need to bear in mind in our attempts to beautify the home.

Too many of us fall into the mistake of thinking that beauty is necessarily expensive. It is not so. Beauty is cheap, in the sense that it is to be had for the taking. We need not go without beautiful trees and shrubs and vines because we lack money with which to buy them of the growers. The nurseryman has not the monopoly of all that is desirable in this respect. Go into the fields and forests,—and go with the seeing eye,—and you will find ample material for the ornamentation of the home grounds—material quite as desirable as that which the dealer offers you at a good, round price. So long as we can have native shrubs like the clethra and the elder and the spirea, the wild rose, the dogwoods, and the alders, and many others that I need not mention here, and such vines as the celastrus, the ampelopsis, and the clematis, we need not lack for material with which to make home beautiful. It is waiting for you on every hand. Among our native trees we have some of the finest in the world, like the elm and the hard and soft maples. Where rapid development is desired, we can add the box-elder to the list. Where the grounds are very small, we can make use of the cut-leaved birch or some of the Japanese maples. All these are easy to grow, and will take care of themselves when once established.

Each home should have its lawn. Of course, it will be a small one on the ordinary village lot, but it serves its purpose by standing between the highway and the home like a symbol of the idea that private and domestic life is so aloof from the public that there is, or should be, a visible sign of separation between them. The development of the lawn is a sure indication that the improvement idea is working itself out in the right direction. Nothing can do more to make a village attractive than well-kept grounds about its homes, and no home can be considered as living up to its privileges as long as it is without its lawn. But do not make the mistake so common among us of scattering shrubs

386 Rural and Village Improvement Societies

and flower-beds all over it. Let it be a green space of sward as broad as possible, with suggestions of restfulness about it, and these it cannot have if it is so broken up by shrubs and beds that all sense of breadth and dignity is destroyed. One good tree on the small lawn is enough, and if this is at the side, so much the better, for it enables us to have a larger unbroken space of sward between the house and the street. Keep all shrubs well to the sides of the lot, and have the beds of annuals pretty well to the rear. Never aim to make the home a show-place. Rather aim to make it a beautiful place, and rest assured that the charm of it will not be lost on the passer-by. Among the shrubs along the sides of the lot hardy flowers, like the hollyhock, the delphinium, the peony, the aster, the perennial phlox, and many others of stately habit and profusion of bloom, can be planted with fine effect. If the owners of adjoining lots can, in a sense, ignore boundary lines, and so arrange the shrubbery and border between them that it can be planted with an eye to unity of effect, charming results may be secured, and the lack of harmony which so frequently characterizes the two sides of the "line fence" can be entirely avoided. This is the only way in which general harmony of decorative planting can be secured in a block. So long as we shut ourselves up within the lines which separate us from our neighbors according to the "metes and bounds" of the surveyor, and work independently in the development of the home grounds, so long will our villages bear witness to lack of unity, and convict us of selfish narrowness in refusing to consider the interests of the community as superior to the interest of the individual. Let us work together and lose sight of the boundary-line in anticipation of the beauty which may result therefrom. The abolition of the line fence between village lots was a long step in the right direction. It should be followed by a union of work and plan in making the space between our homes so artistic in its effect that each owner can take pride in it, and feel that his interests are not confined wholly to his side of the lot. Here is where the truth of the old saying that in union there is strength can be forcibly illustrated in every community where houses stand near one another. Ask any landscape gardener what he thinks of this suggestion, and I am quite sure that he will tell you that there are great possibilities in the way of decorative planting where the two spaces are treated as one, but that by treating them independently much of the chance for good work is lost.

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I have spoken of hardy plants in the decoration of the home grounds. Let me refer to them once more for the purpose of emphasizing my good opinion of their many merits. They are much to be preferred to annuals. They have a dignity not possessed by the latter. They are

generally rich in color-effects. They are easily grown. They are good for an indefinite period if properly treated. Their value is becoming more fully understood each year, and the amateur gardener makes a serious mistake if he refuses to avail himself of their assistance in making the home grounds attractive. By a judicious selection of kinds it is possible to have flowers in the hardy border from May to October. A large collection of these plants will require less attention than a few small beds of annuals. But I would not be understood as trying to discourage the cultivation of the latter. They are all right—in their place, but that place is not on the grounds between the street and the dwelling.

The field of operation for local improvement societies is not confined to the home by any means. Public places, like the church, the school-house, and others of similar character, should receive attention. Let the aim be to make the entire village as attractive as the home, and do not relax your efforts until this has been done. Nothing adds more to the general attraction of a place than beautiful grounds about its places of greatest public importance.

One of the finest examples of this phase of improvement work is to be seen in the city of Menominee, Michigan, where the grounds about the Public Library, the great Manual Training-School, and the various ward school buildings are all treated with an artistic unity of purpose which is charming in results. And what adds to the value of this truly valuable object-lesson is the fact that native shrubs, trees, and plants have been made use of almost entirely in planting the grounds. It is well worth a long journey to this place to see what public spirit can do when directed by good taste.



If you organize an improvement society, be sure to include the women in it, and give them an opportunity to carry out some of their ideas. A woman has a keen eye for the beautiful, and her knowledge of color-combinations will be of great benefit in the arrangement of flowering plants. But her usefulness will not be confined to the æsthetic features of the undertaking. Women can be as practical as men are. In Green Bay, Wisconsin, certain lines of street work have been put into the hands of a committee of prominent women with most satisfactory results. They not only plan, and plan wisely, but they execute, and execute thoroughly.

It is a most excellent plan to interest the children in this work also. They will bring a great deal of enthusiasm to the performance of their share of it, and take pride in living up to the responsibilities placed upon them. It will be good training for them. Bear in mind

388 Rural and Village Improvement Societies

this fact—that the greatest measure of success is almost always the result of the widest, heartiest coöperation. Get everybody interested, if possible, and keep them interested by giving them something to do. Make active members of everyone in the organization.

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Social features should be made a part of the attraction of a local improvement society, especially in the winter. Have regular meetings at which papers are read on various phases of the work; discuss the spring campaign, and aim to draw everybody into the discussion; let music and literary exercises combine to give variety to these meetings; once in a while have a supper. In short, be sociable, and get acquainted with your neighbors, and let your improvement society be the bond of union which will develop friendliness and harmony in the community.

The financial benefits derived by any village or community from a local improvement society should not be overlooked. Let a town which has been "going down hill" for years, so far as its appearance is concerned, take upon itself the new life and enterprise which is the direct result of a hearty coöperation of its citizens in the work of general improvement, and it will surely realize a substantial financial benefit from it. The price of real estate will improve as much as the place does. If a man in search of a new home come into such a place, he will be much more likely to invest his money in it than in a town that has no such showing of public spirit. The spirit of improvement is in the air, and it gives a healthy tone which makes the stranger feel quite sure that the place must be a pleasant one to live in.

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The object of this paper has been to show some of the benefits brought about by local improvement societies and the means by which they can be realized. I hope that what has been said will interest those who recognize the need of improvement in their respective communities and lead to the formation of societies, whose benefits will not be fully realized until they have worked that transformation which kindred societies have brought to many places I have had the pleasure of visiting. Our educational and reform societies are doing an unlimited amount of good, and the local improvement society is capable of doing equally useful work. The development of the communal interests of a neighborhood should go hand in hand with the training of its intellect. The local improvement society should teach the gospel of beauty and set good taste and orderliness in opposition to the degrading influence of neglect and indifference as to environment. It will surely make better men and women of us by so doing.

THE OTHER SIDE OF BOSS

By Jerome Case Bull



BOSS'S grave is back of Boulder; but Boss's grave is empty. On a rise of ground in a clearing in the redwoods it was dug—dug roughly, hurriedly. It is big enough for a giant, deep enough even to satisfy those who made it, deep enough even for Boss. It is at the very edge of the forest. At its head a giant redwood towers and, if you know and look up into the motionless green of the tree, you may see, dangling from its great arm, the end of an old rope. The grave was dug at night and its diggers showed no light; they were not particular about the shape of the hole they made so long as it was deep. "Deep, anyhow, deep as hell, so's he'll stay," as one said, "with a rock to rest his thoughts on." And it is not so very long ago that it was dug, not so long ago as the redwoods count the time.

Nightmare, where they knew about it, was one of the most refining logging camps in the Big Basin. It was a shame that it should have been called Nightmare, but Knight, its first settler, had had a habit of "throwing fits," and while there was more than hereditary excuse for such unseemly actions on his part, there seemed no better reasons for calling the place after any other of the names that were suggested. They were all bad enough as names, all properly appropriate as characterizing the early atmosphere of the locality. And yet, from the purely physical side, there is no more beautiful spot in all the Coast Range of mountains. In the very heart of the redwoods, on a cleared rise of ground overlooking the tumbling waters of Boulder Creek, Knight had found a site for his cabin of shakes that an artist might have dreamed. But Knight's dreams were practical. He saw a fortune in the vast forests of redwood about him and settled there to own, rather than love, the land. That was long ago. He lived elsewhere now, and a foreign doctor of great renown, and little romance, had cured him of the fits, though Nightmare could not, would not, change its name.

Boss Biddle was the overseer at the logging mill, the man its owner had put in charge to look out for his interests, and, from that standpoint, its owner had chosen well. To the men at the camp he was a bear, a human bear, but a bear nevertheless, a bear that had not been tamed even by the refining influences of Nightmare. Big, burly, brusque, with red hair, red face, red eyes almost, Boss cowed the men until they were in reality not men, but slaves. They worked for

him at the mill or chopped for him in the hills for bread; they got nothing else, unless the mere life of the air they worked in, the quiet, simple joy of a pipe at nightfall amid the great trees with the waters of Boulder rushing along below them, a sunrise perhaps—unless such things were worth considering. Boss was their master in every way. He was not alone their manager in the business sense; his personality overpowered them, suppressed them, cheated them of their right even to the pleasure in the work they lived by; and they hated him.

He must have known it. He must have seen it. A blind man might have warned him. Self-preservation surely was a sense he knew not, as he knew not fear. The mutterings of the men, their sullen looks, he minded no more than he minded the shifting fog drifting in at night. Time and time again they had tried to get rid of him. They had written to Knight himself and to his agent in town. They had planned, they had plotted, and, yes, they had even prayed, such of them as knew how, but Boss was still their master.

One morning, however, a new plan was suggested to them, and before night, as one man, the camp had decided to carry it out.

Jim Griffeth, the sawyer, had been found on the rocks of the creek below the mill dump, dead. Griffeth had been their leader, the head of the movement against Boss, and the one man whose voice might have aroused them to or prevailed against the step they had decided upon in his name. But Griffeth was dead. Work at the mill stopped,—not because Griffeth was dead, but because Boss could get no other sawyer to take the dead man's place. All day long knots of men gathered at his cabin to look at his broken clay. There was little said. It was plain enough. But had he really fallen down the dump to his death? What was this story, growing, growing, of a row he had had with Boss, of words and oaths that had been overheard between them, of a blow, even, that Boss had struck? Who started it? Was it true? Quien sabe? It was there strong enough, and Judge Lynch believed it and took up the case. It was to have its hearing that night.

The fog came in not farther than the crest of the ridge. There its gray roll rested, waited. The spot selected was a mile back of the camp and higher up the mountain—so high, indeed, that the top of the great redwood, beneath which men were digging, was shrouded in mist. Silence and darkness reigned. There was a chill in the air—the spicy damp of the shadowless woods about, the salty breath of the fog above. The men shivered as they worked. Now and again a pick clicked on a rock, a spade grated over gravel, a stone slipped from the loosened earth and plunged away down the mountain side. One of the men laughed, a short, mirthless chuckle, which died away in the grave itself as, bending over to smooth the earthy bed, he was lost in the depths of the hole.

"Deep enough?" one of them asked down to him.

"Deep as hell, so's he'll stay all right," he answered up. "Give us a rock to rest his thoughts on." And together two of them rolled a boulder to the edge of the pit and tumbled it in.

The work finished, they sat down on the pile of dirt they had thrown up to wait. The gray fog over the range in the west sifted lower and lower among the trees until it seemed a wall pressing down upon them, pressing down upon them the silence of eternity, the silence of the redwoods at night. But as they waited the east grew bright; a host of giant trees rose gravely out of the night and stalked along the range before them, sharp, black silhouettes against the coming light, and slowly, majestically, a full moon rose over the Big Basin. The men beheld its coming with awe. The blackness about them was drawn from the earth—down the face of the mountain, across the basin, and up the range it trailed away and the air grew luminous. A thin mist hung above the valley, above the range in the west the fog lay, a vein of gleaming silver.

There was the sound of breaking brush coming towards them, and the men sprang to their feet. Someone hallooed; a halloo answered. The voices were like the hoots of owls, low, hollow, melancholy. But it was a single man that pushed into the clearing, breathless; they had waited for more.

"What's wrong?" they demanded in a breath.

"He's gone," the messenger answered. "Only the Chinaman at his cabin. Says he's gone to Boulder to see his girl."

"To *w-h-a-t*!"

"To see his girl."

"His girl?" the men laughed derisively. "His girl! His girl's good. He's on to our game and skipped; that's his girl."

"Oh, it's a girl all right. The coolie says he goes all the time, every night; comes back at midnight."

"They waiting for him?"

"No, going after him. They're waiting for you at the creek now."

Down in the valley, at the edge of the Big Basin, the men from the mountain found their fellows, and together they pushed on down the road to the settlement after their man. The girl idea impressed them all alike. Boss had skipped. The Chinaman's story was a part of it. He had reasoned that they would believe it and wait for him. They would believe it—when Boss had wings. The wings he was using now were of another kind, for another purpose. Why had they blundered so and let their man get away? Once out of the basin and the game was up. He was hours ahead of them, well mounted, of course, with good reasons to hurry. Some of them were for giving it up, for turning back, but the majority prevailed. They would go at

least to the settlement, satisfy themselves that the Chinaman was lying, do what they could to intercept the fugitive. As they went on one or two of them recalled that they had seen Boss leave the camp at nightfall now and then; but no, there could be nothing in the girl story: it was too preposterous, too impossible. Boss and a girl! Boss with another instinct than that of the bully! Another Boss! It was absurd.

There was the sound of a galloping horse on the road ahead, and the men drew off into the darkness of the brush at the side, one alone, their leader, keeping the moonlit trail.

"Meet anyone?" this leader asked as the horseman drew up before him.

"Man and a girl, back the road a ways."

"Know the man?"

"Boss Biddle, I think. Anything wrong?"

The leader gave a low whistle. "And a girl?" he echoed.

The horseman looked at him in wonder, then rode on. The men came back into the moonlight.

"Did you hear what he said?" the leader asked them.

"Looks like the girl story's right," one suggested.

"He ain't on to us at all," said another. "We'll wait for him and take him as he comes along back."

A suggestion that it might be just as well to make sure that the man down the road with the girl was the one they wanted before they waited for him sent them ahead again. But the progress was no longer a chase; they felt sure of their victim; they were stalking their game now and they moved cautiously, though a powdered dust lay thick on the road and a footfall made no noise. In and out, back and forth around the dark and wooded cañons of the hills wound the trail, bright as day in the white moonlight on this side of the gulch, black as night in the shadow of the hill across the way. Something, more curious than revengeful, was stealing over them, and, though Lynch still moved at their head and murder was in their hearts, though they believed not at all that there was a girl for whom Boss was to sacrifice his life, they nevertheless wondered; and curiosity played with their thoughts.

So they came down out of the mountains into the valley of the Big Basin, following the road to Boulder.

Half a mile this side of the town the highway skirts a thick grove of *madroña*, then drops in a sweeping curve into green fields of alfalfa. From the edge of the grove the road through the fields is visible almost to the settlement. It lay white and still this night like a bended bow on the earth. The men stood in the shadow of the trees and gazed down upon it, searching its length for signs of life. So bright and white was the moonlight over all the land that the two figures coming slowly along its dusty way were at first invisible to them. But as the figures

climbed the hill they took shape, and the men, waiting, drew back into the blackness of the *madroñas*.

Now and again as the figures stopped they seemed to fade away, to blend with earth and sky in the mellow haze of light. To the very edge of the trees they came, a man and a girl plainly enough now, and there stopped to look back over the fields and down upon Boulder.

He was big and towered above her. As he spoke he leaned towards her and his voice was very earnest. They were evidently in some serious discussion, and his first word implied a question asked which as yet she had not answered.

"Well?" he said, and there was something infinitely strong and true in the man's voice. But still the girl did not answer. She was looking out over the shimmering valley as though she had not heard or was not yet ready. He took her hand.

"Do you think I do not love you?" he asked.

She shook her head slowly. "I know you love me, Boss," she said, "but, Boss, oh Boss, I am afraid. I am afraid." She caught hold of his arms and held him away at the full length of her own. "I know you love me, I know that; and, Boss, I love you too; but still I am afraid—afraid of you. I am afraid of what you are,—what you seem, not what you are really,—not what you are to me." He pushed her arms away and would have caught her to him, but she drew back. "I am afraid of what they say you are, of what you might be even to me, if you did not love me always,—if—if—if I did not do, always, what you liked,—if you ever got angry with me. Why, Boss, do you know what they are saying in Boulder now?" she drew farther away, afraid to speak the words. "That you killed Jim Griffith. That you struck him and threw him on the rocks. That he didn't fall down the dumps, but that you killed him—you, Boss, you—and threw him there. But it isn't so, it isn't so, Boss, it isn't so, I know it isn't so."

It was a rush of words and there was a passion of protest in her voice against the thing she said, but there was a fear too.

Boss looked at the girl in amazement. Stunned, incredulous, he jumped back, an oath half uttered on his lips, and a terrible anger swept over him.

"What! What are you saying, girl?" he cried. "I killed Griffith? That I killed him?"

For one moment she saw Boss as the men at the mill knew him, the man they hated, the Boss that even now they waited, not a hundred feet away, to lynch—but it was only for a moment. The anger passed. Boss gave a great laugh, a roar that awoke the echoes; and the other Boss, her Boss, was back, holding her in his arms.

"It's all a lie, little girl," he said, "I never killed Griffith, I never laid a finger on him in my life. It's a lie they have started to do me.

Who said it? Why, I did not even see him the night he was killed. Wasn't I here with you? You know it's a lie. You do not believe it?" He said the last words looking earnestly into her face, and then, fearing, doubting, for a moment, her belief in him, he drew himself up to his great height and raised his arms to heaven over her.

"Before God, little girl, as I love you, all of that is a lie. They hate me at the mill because I am their boss, and because they hate me they say that against me. I believe they would even kill me if they could. But you, you are different, you do not hate me,"—she gave a little cry of protest,—“you do not hate me, you must not believe what they say,—not that, not that.” He took her head in his hands and turned her face up to his own. His voice was low and gentle. “You must not believe it because it is not so. What I am to you now, little girl, I will be to you always, because I will always love you; you must not be afraid.”

The men in the *madroñas* heard no answer, but they saw the two walk on by the dark grove for some distance, then turn and come slowly back along the shadow-flecked road. Boss's arm was about the girl and her head rested close against him as they passed. By the edge of the wood, where they had stood before, they stopped again, and she laughed softly.

“I shall never be afraid now,” she said, “with you.”

And Boss's voice, heavy and deep, was the caress of a lover.

The men who watched so stealthily their coming but a short time before saw them go away down the road, through the moonlit fields, back to Boulder,—watched and wondered.

At last the leader shook himself from the spell of the moonlight which seemed over them all and turned back towards Nightmare.

“Boys,” he said, “guess there must be another side to Boss.”

LOVE AND REASON

BY AGNES LEE

At her door, in summer air,
Deftly knitteth Reason
Storm-robcs for the heart to wear
In a sterner season.

Cometh Love with footsteps rash
Where she counts her riches,
Pulls a thread, and in a flash
Ravels out the stitches.

THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE

By Clinton Dangerfield



THE alarmed echoes caught up the crack of Carshalton's rifle, flinging the sound from rock to rock in the ravine below. A second shot followed the first so quickly that they might have been deemed one, but the effect was twofold, for with the first John Rexford reeled in his saddle, with the second his startled horse came crashing to the ground.

The bursting of a rotten girth saved Rexford from being crushed to death, the horse rolling clear of him in its last struggles. As it was, his case was bad enough, for his right leg was broken and over him stood Carshalton, seller of all properly unsalable things, who was just now about to close a deal on his well-salted "Lady Lu" silver mine which would make him some fifty thousand dollars richer, and the purchaser so much the poorer for the rest of his life.

To be sure, Colonel Wayne, the would-be buyer, had sent Rexford to give an expert opinion on the mine. And just here had arisen a serious difference of opinion between Rexford and Carshalton.

Experience had so far justified Carshalton in the belief that experts were of two kinds: either they were fools who knew nothing about the customary mine ruses, and therefore were easily handled, or else they were wise men who, on the receipt of a due consideration, saw everything through rose-colored glasses. Rexford had disconcerted him by belonging to neither class, and had outraged Carshalton by his outspoken remarks concerning the worthlessness of the "Lady Lu" and by contemptuously refusing the heavy bribe delicately offered him.

The victor now coolly proceeded to help himself to the fallen man's papers, especially a written message of warning which Rexford expected to send by wire the instant he reached the foot of the mountain. By a little work this message could be altered to satisfactory wording, and yet appear to be written in Rexford's hand all the way through, this copy being held for proof later.

Rexford, despite his agony, drew his revolver on the vulture-faced sharper approaching him, but a snap was the only result. Carshalton laughed.

"Didn't reckon I'd leave your pistol in fix to spoil the whole thing, did you?" he asked. "Come now—quiet with your hands. You can't stop me. All this is your own fault, anyway, you blamed fool!"

Without more ado he went whistling down the steep mountain road to his horse, fastened fifty yards below. Once mounted, he made all speed possible, though the ground was villainously rocky, set with sharp limestone fragments.

For a few seconds Rexford lay still, in exceeding bitterness of soul. Ordinarily the matter would have been bad enough, but to stand well in Colonel Wayne's eyes was more than life to Rexford, since the Colonel's pretty daughter idolized her father, and the best passport to her favor was the good will of the rather peppery Colonel. Now both father and daughter would despise him, for on the strength of the telegram he knew Carshalton would send it once, in the expert's own name, the deal would be closed and the Colonel practically ruined.

He looked around him in frantic desperation. To the right lay his dead horse, to the left the fragments of an old ox-wagon abandoned by some disgusted bark hauler, who had in vain endeavored to use the discarded mountain road.

The wreckage seemed significant of how little hope he might have of passers-by. Rexford groaned aloud, his wound reminding him that he might die there, so far as Carshalton's mercy went.

He shouted at the top of his voice, again and again, but only the echoes or the shrill cry of frightened woodpeckers answered him. His head dropped on his arms; he abandoned himself to despair for what seemed a century.

Then suddenly the stillness of the mountain woods was broken. Plaintive, sweet, tuned to a monotone, came the voice of a woman.

The melody, dropping like honey of strange sweetness from her lips, was only a wild camp-meeting hymn, but Ellen McArthur's thoughts were not on the church. Wrapped in a maiden dream of her own, not less potently glamorous for its primeval qualities, she came on swift, bare feet around the corner, and found herself shocked from her visions of love to a comprehension of tragedy.

"Was that you a-hollerin'?" she cried in quick repentance. "I never 'lowed there wuz anybody in trouble—jest thought 'twas one o' them valley hunters yellin' to his mates. The idgits air allers gittin' losted. What's the matter?"

"My leg is broken," said Rexford feverishly. "Look here, girl, there's a man gone ahead of me. He wants to send a message by wire at the station below. Mine must get in first. Take it there before him, and you shall have five hundred dollars of your own."

Her eyes flashed fire, not with lust of the money, but with the thought of how easily it would solve the problem of extreme poverty which had so delayed her wedding.

"That feller who's tryin' to git his in fust," she returned rapidly, "was he in er gray suit, carryin' er rifle, ridin' a bay?"

"Yes, yes!"

"Too late," said the girl bitterly. "I seed him frum the p'int up yonder fifteen minutes ago. He'd git thar afore me best I could do!" Then a rich color flooded her face—she laughed out, mellowly, triumphantly. "No, he won't, neither! I'll head him off yet! Quick, stranger, gimme your piece er writing."

"I must pencil it first," gasped Rexford. "But how are you——"

"Don't waste no time talkin'—do it!"

Fired, in spite of his disbelief, with new hope, Rexford, in painful haste, managed to scribble his warning on the back of a torn envelope in pencil.

That finished, he found the girl supporting one of the substantial old wheels of the ox-wagon. She had snatched a long, faded ribbon from her hair, letting down the tumbled masses of black, and now she bound the message firmly to the hub of the wheel and then dictated another to the astounded Rexford:

"Mister Agent, send this soon's you clap eyes on it, er don't you never show yourself near Ellen."

She tied this command securely to Rexford's message, observing sagely that *he* would understand, meaning the operator.

"But, surely," cried Rexford, "you are not so mad as to think you can roll that wheel down the side, blocked as it is by a thousand obstacles?"

"Mad?" said the girl. "I don't git mad very often, stranger. I reckon you mean silly; but you wait."

She vanished behind a huge rock, which on the lower side partially cut off the view of the valley.

Tormented beyond words by an agony of mind worse than that of his body, Rexford actually rose. He was near the boulder. By clinging to its rough surface he managed to attain the other side.

Then he understood her idea. Fifty feet below them began an almost perpendicular tie-chute, or slide, once used for sending white-oak ties to the railroad below. It ran sheer to the track. As far as Rexford could see nothing stood in the way.

The girl, having struggled to a good starting point, now stood posing the great wheel. Her long hair blew backward in the wind, her wide eyes were fixed eagerly on the course. Never helmsman looked more anxiously to his ship than she to her wheel of fortune. Her small, bare feet, seeming the smaller for her lithe and graceful height, were dug desperately into the leaf-mould, for the weight of the wheel was pulling to be free.

At last, after what seemed to Rexford an age, she loosed it. It bounded wildly forward, while she, glancing upward to her companion, clapped her hands joyously.

"It's gwine!" she cried. "It's gwine! It'll go plum to the very kyar-track, plum into Seth's door! Thar it goes—thar! Thar! My Gord!"

"What is it?" shouted Rexford, too blind with pain to be able to see clearly.

"Hit struck somethin'! Bounced ten feet, and it's curvin' plum offen the road! We're ruint! No, no. Hit didn't quite git off. You are lucky, shore!" She clapped her slender hands exultantly as the broad-tired wheel, on the turn of which hung a fortune and the happiness of three lives, as well as her own innocent dreams of wealth, bounded with momentarily increasing impetus down the steep declivity, while in the valley below she knew that her rival was now galloping swiftly towards the station, nearly in sight.

Gallantly the wheel held its own. Tiny wood creatures blinked at it, dazed, as it shot past. A mottled snake, crossing its track, tried vainly to escape it, but found his coils undamaged after all, so swift was the speed of the weight that passed over him.

In anguished suspense, Rexford clung to the boulder, while his companion continued to call out the progress his eyes were too dim to follow.

"See how small it's gittin'—no bigger than mammy's ole platter! You'll hatter go pretty fast, mister man down thar, if you git in fust. Hard work ketchin' up with a woman an' a wheel! Thar, clip! hit's on the track. Hooray! Seth's seed hit—he's on ther kyar-line hisself. I'd know that red shirt of hisn in a thousan'. He's bendin' over hit!"

She turned and climbed back towards Rexford, tossing the wind-tangled hair from her forehead with satisfaction as she talked. "Don't ye fret, stranger, hit's all right. I reckon I might ez well tell ye—Seth will do anything fer me. He's to be my man. I don't allers run ez wild-lookin' ez you ketched me, fer I had jest slipped down here ter peep at ther office from that big rock. You bet he'll send it. You warn't foolin' me 'bout that money—was you?"

This query was not answered until later, when she met full assurance of her prize. Rexford had fainted.

Below, the astounded agent had barely secured and promptly dispatched the message so cavalierly hurled at him (he happened to be lounging on the platform as the impromptu wheel struck the track) when a horseman galloped up and swung into the narrow office.

"Send that message, instantly!" he said imperatively, flinging a piece of paper on the table. "Mark it 'rush.'"

The operator read it slowly aloud, to make sure he had deciphered it correctly, then as he sat down he said dryly, with the freedom of the provincial:

"Sought of a contrary-minded fellow! Air you his agent?"

Carshalton nodded. "Why?"

"Oh, nothin'; only I jest sent one from him to the same party sayin' the 'Lady Lu' wuz the biggest swindle out."

Carshalton went purple.

"You lie! He could not. I left him—that is, I know I got here first."

"I ain't disputin' that," returned the agent coolly, his shrewd mind suddenly grasping an inkling of the truth. "He ain't been here, but his message has. Thar's the copy ef you-un don't believe me."

Carshalton snatched up the shakily scrawled message. "How did it get here?" he asked, burning with suppressed rage.

"How'd it come? It—say, do you want me to send this er not?"

"Damn you—no! How did this come?"

"By the partic'lar post," said the operator, grinning. "See that ole wheel out thar? Smartes' woman in the State sent it down the tie-chute! Come like greased lightnin', just afore you turned up, and—say, stranger, but you can swear!"



THE FOUR GRACES

BY ALONZO RICE

A BLUE sky, a red rose, a tress of gold, a song,
These make beautiful the earth and banish thoughts of
wrong,

Until the hill, the vale and rill, to my glad vision seem
Arrayed in all the beauty of a peri's fairest dream.

When fervid shines the heat of day amid the crowded throng,
A blue sky, a red rose, a tress of gold, a song,
Dispel the thousand little doubts, each shadow of a care,
And gazing on the heavens I can see that hope is there!

When longing for a something that is better than I've known,
A knowledge that my weary feet are coming to my own,
A blue sky, a red rose, a tress of gold, a song,
Are staffs for my infirmity, and make me brave and strong!

A health to you, good friend of mine, a plenty to you all!
May each one be at his home when Fortune makes her call!
With sweetest wine to lips of mine I pledge both deep and long
A blue sky, a red rose, a tress of gold, a song.

TIBERIUS THE TRUANT

By Phæbe Lyde



IT need hardly be said that Uncle Horace was entirely responsible for the name.

"C'est un vaurien, l'oncle Horace!" declared Anatole, as he waved the salad-fork with a free and noble gesture. "I tell thee, Zélie, he mocks himself of all. See, then, how he sits forever, his long nose between a book, and his pipe in the mouth. He speaks but to deride. That he should make light of Monsieur and Madame, *passé* encore, they have their little weaknesses as we know; *ces enfants*, also, one need never spare; but to rail at a harmless innocent, a creature of the Bon Dieu—I say again it is not well."

"Calm thyself, my cabbage," remonstrated Zélie, "thou knowest that emotions kill the digestion." She continued swiftly peeling potatoes as she spoke. "Ce pauvre M. Horace, he is very gentil, tout de même; I like that thin brown face, and those big eyes,—my faith, how they shine! It is good if he can laugh at others, Ma'amselle Angèle mocks herself of him, pour sûr." She rose, gathering her potatoes, which she dropped into a neat white pot. "Also what harm is there in the name? Me, I find it very pretty."

Anatole groaned aloud and threw down the salad-fork in desperation. "Just Heaven!" he cried. "C'est comme ça, les femmes. But, in effect, thou knowest not history."

"It is true," Zélie calmly admitted, "I know only my *livre de cuisine*. And who was he then, this Tiberius?"

"But he was a monster, a tyrant!" thundered Anatole; he beat up his mayonnaise as though it had been the tyrant in question. "A bas les tyrans! Conspez their ashes! And ce M. Horace, an American citizen, the denizen of a free and enlightened republic, he will call an innocent lamb by that accursed name. Non, c'est trop fort."

His wife merely shrugged her shoulders and continued her preparations for dinner; long experience had taught her the uselessness of discussion, especially with man.

It was Anatole himself who had introduced the lamb into the household over which he was pleased to preside. It must be confessed that, despite his diatribes against tyranny, he was an autocrat at heart; fortunately, his rule, though firm, was kindly; when he set Monsieur right he showed infinite benignity, and he only opposed Madame for her

own advantage. It was nevertheless inconvenient, just as Madame was starting on a round of calls, to have Anatole appear leading a white, woolly object, which loudly bleated, although adorned by a ravishing pink bow.

"Madame," said Anatole oratorically, "I bring a lamb! Ces enfants have need of something to love."

The children possessed the usual complement of pastors and masters, but he always took the tone of being directly responsible for their spiritual welfare.

Madame regarded the lamb vaguely with large, ineffectual, brown eyes, and dropped first her card-case, then her parasol, then her handkerchief.

"Oh Anatole," she faltered, "it's very kind, I'm sure, but it seems to me the children have already—— You know there's the pony, four dogs, and three kittens, besides Letty's canary; and Alexander *will* keep white mice." Her voice died away in a frightened murmur, and the situation was indeed trying. Anatole sighed gloomily, regarding Madame more in sorrow than in anger, while through the open door Thomas, who hated to have his horse waiting, transfixed his unfortunate mistress with the stony eye of a gorgon; at the same time the lamb, still bleating, jerked itself from Anatole and began to eat the lace handkerchief.

"If Madame would but observe," cried Anatole, "how the poor angel desires to assist her. He picks up Madame's handkerchief."

In response to a baleful glance from Thomas the off horse reared and fidgeted, next moment the school-room door burst open, all the children rushed through the hall with shrieks of joy, and circled round the lamb in a war-dance of triumph.

Madame was not the woman to lead a lost cause. She meekly accepted her card-case and parasol, allowed Anatole to help her into the victoria, and was driven away by the irate Thomas much faster than she at all desired, leaving the lamb master of the field.

"What could I say, my dear?" she said plaintively to her husband later. "Anatole's feelings are so easily hurt. And what shall we do with a lamb? Can you suppose he will want to keep it in the house?"

Monsieur only laughed with his usual nonchalance. "Well, old girl," he said, "unless you can scare up enough gumption to bounce him, I guess you'll have to make the best of the menagerie. Zélie's worth a whole flock, anyway. That purée to-night was a dream."

The bare thought of parting with Zélie was insupportable, and Madame, in her soft, drawling voice, took up another grievance.

"The children are delighted, of course, and their Uncle Horace has insisted on calling the creature Tiberius. I'm sure I don't remember anything about Roman history, but I know he was not at all a proper

character. However, Horace says someone has just written a book which proves that he was really a perfect paragon, and so he thinks it only fair to name the lamb after him." She shook her head sadly. "Poor boy, I'm glad he has any small pleasures, that wretched little Angelina is leading him such a life."

The entire household, down to its very youngest member, was aware that Cousin Angelina and Uncle Horace were on the outs; furthermore knew her to be engaged in a desperate flirtation with another admirer, commonly designated as "*that* Mr. Potter." Opinions varied as to whether Mr. Potter's papa had been a coal baron, a steel magnate, an oil king, or a silver Senator; but that he, himself, was a gilded youth of the most gilded description admitted of no dispute; and it may be added that the original material was not "refined gold."

"Me, I find him very *canaille*," pronounced Zélie. She was walking through the wood with Anatole, some days later, to inspect the lodgings of Tiberius. "He is of a stoutness, *ce* M. Pottaire, and red-faced. I have always the idea that he drinks. Also he is not aimable, oh, *là-là*."

"For that, no," Anatole agreed. "I, myself, have seen him make a *coup de pied* at Tiberius. But he is rich, *richissime*, and *Ma'amselle* Angèle can turn him round her finger."

Zélie shook her wise head. "*Rira bien qui rira le dernier*," she answered. "Once he is master, she will dance to another tune. And she is not one made to be unhappy; she is like a little flame, *ohé*, she has not those red curls for nothing. Now with M. Horace there would be never any danger."

Anatole dismissed the subject with a shrug. "I have not observed," he said drily, "that danger is displeasing to thy sex. *Maintenant*, Zélie, close thine eyes and give me the hand. Two steps to the right. *Voilà!*"

A loud bleat from Tiberius completed his sentence, while Zélie opened her eyes and threw up her hands in unfeigned admiration. "But, Anatole," she cried, "it is ravishing! Thou art truly of an incomparable address."

Her husband swelled with modest pride, having, indeed, neglected most of his domestic duties for several days in order to build for Tiberius a suitable retreat. Under a protecting oak-tree he had constructed a small log cabin, while a neat rustic paling enclosed a square plot of ground where Tiberius might gambol at will, and in which he was at present sullenly struggling with his blue ribbon.

Anatole brought from the pocket of his large white apron a lump of sugar, which he held enticingly through the bars. "Come, then, my lamblet," he began in wheedling tones; but he was interrupted by a sort of whirlwind that swept down the path beside him.

Cousin Angelina, driving four of *ces enfants* abreast, came dashing through the wood, her yellow muslin frock fluttering in her wake. She

was hardly taller than one of the children, and she seemed to float above the earth. Her copper-colored hair danced in a thousand burnished curls, her hazel eyes held a spark of fire, her scarlet lips were parted, and her cheeks glowed crimson; she looked, as Zélie had said, like a flame. She drew up her team with a jerk as she came round the corner just in time to avoid knocking over Uncle Horace, whose tall, slightly stooping figure was dawdling along, a book, as usual, between his fingers, and another falling out of his pocket.

He made a ceremonious bow to the fair charioteer.

"Hail, Aurora," he cried in rather a mocking voice; "you have borrowed the chariot of the sun, I see. Take care, lovely nymph, that you don't put someone's eyes out."

Cousin Angelina only tossed her copper-colored curls and did not answer, while the team curveted and pranced. Uncle Horace came a little nearer. "Angel," he said in a softer tone, "don't you need a relay?" But before she could speak Tiberius had created a diversion.

Anatole, from motives of discretion, had turned his back to the group and was showing Zélie how the gate fastened, when Tiberius, who had been watching his opportunity, suddenly made a rush for freedom, dodged through Anatole's legs, and butted Sandy full in the stomach; at which the unfortunate child went down immediately with the rest of the team on top.

"Don't cry, Sandy, darling," said Cousin Angelina as a piercing wail came from the bottom of the heap. "Don't cry, and you shall have some of those nice sugarplums that Mr. Potter brought me this morning."

It seemed a natural suggestion, but on hearing it Uncle Horace suddenly stopped disentangling arms and legs, turned abruptly on his heel, and disappeared. Cousin Angelina tossed her curls again triumphantly, and as soon as Tiberius had been restored to his lair, and the children set upon their feet, she gathered her team together and galloped them off in the opposite direction.

"C'est drôles, les femmes," observed Anatole, shaking his head, as he and Zélie took their way back to the kitchen. "She is pretty enough to eat, Ma'amselle Angele, but she keeps l'oncle Horace on a gridiron tout de même."

"Petite sotte," said Zélie philosophically, "and she prefers M. Horace all the time."

"But why then torment him?" demanded the bewildered Anatole.

"But why—but why?" cried Zélie. "Sont ils assez betes, ces hommes? Because she does not wish him to know it. Because she chooses to punish him. Because M. Horace has made her a remonstrance contre ce M. Pottaire."

Anatole opened round eyes of astonishment. "How knowest thou that?" he inquired severely.

"If I know it, it is because I am not deaf," his wife retorted. "When people dispute outside the dairy can one help but hear? Voistu, it was like this: I was searching there for cream the other evening when they placed themselves on the bench near the window,—the little bench under the églantine." Zélie paused dramatically.

"Eh, bien," urged Anatole.

"Eh, bien, he recounts to her that he has been trying all day to speak with her. Comme Mademoiselle I await myself for a tendresse—mais, au contraire, it is to make her a little sermon sur ce M. Pottaire, whom, it appears, he does not find an edifying acquaintance pour une jeune fille. Ma foi, it is not the trouble to bring a demoiselle out au clair de lune, under the églantine, in order to sing her such songs as that. Alors, Ma'amselle Angèle, who is, without doubt, piqued, throws herself into a fine fury, accuses M. Horace of being a coward who attacks people behind their backs, declares she will choose her own friends and that he shall ask her pardon."

"Sapristi, it is well said. And what answers l'oncle Horace?"

"M. Horace, who has the pride of the devil, makes her a grand bow, says in his mocking voice that he regrets to speak ill of those she so much admires, but that it is to her to demand pardon from him for such accusations. Ma'amselle vows she will never do so, and requests that he address to her no more counsels. With that they walk themselves back to the house like two mutes, and since then Ma'amselle torments him as thou seest."

"Enfin," said Anatole cheerfully, "since they are always quarrelling they will perhaps be happier apart."

"Imbécile," returned his wife with fine scorn, "they will never be happy until they have made it up pour de bon. Sainte Vierge,"—she broke off, giving a look of horror at the clock,—“here is midday which approaches itself, and I who waste me the time in paying visits to this Tiberius."

In one way or another Tiberius certainly occupied unlimited time and attention. The children adored and petted him, while Anatole's portly form was seen at every hour approaching or leaving the lamb's sylvan retreat. He brushed and combed Tiberius daily, he adorned him with ribbons of variegated hue, he watched over his diet with a fatherly eye. Once when Tiberius was stricken with sudden ailment, Anatole sat up all night by him in the kitchen, administering medications and soothing his bleats. Fortunately the lamb recovered next day, as Monsieur declared that instant execution would have been the result had the illness been prolonged.

It is sad to narrate that Tiberius repaid this affection by showing every sign of a reckless and ungrateful disposition. He tore off his ribbons and trampled them under foot; he destroyed the neat tin

dishes in which Anatole put his meals; he bit at the rustic palings and nibbled the bark from his cabin; whenever he was able he escaped and wandered at his own sweet will through the greenwood, throwing the household into agonies until an incautious bleat betrayed his whereabouts and he was captured and led back to servitude.

On one celebrated occasion he had successfully interrupted an interview between Cousin Angelina and "*that* Mr. Potter," greatly to the gentleman's discomfiture. Janet, who was the family mimic, gave Uncle Horace a spirited account of the transaction.

"Oh Nunky, it was *such* fun. We were all out hunting for Tiberius, you know, when we saw those two coming through the wood like a regular pair of gabies, so we crept along behind for a joke. He was all dressed up to the nines, puffing himself out that way he does, and Cousin Angelina walking on her tiptoes, looking as if butter wouldn't melt in her mouth; he was just stuffing her with taffy, we could tell *that*, though, of course, we didn't come close enough to really listen. Presently he kind of goggled his eyes at her and made a grab at her hand, when all of a sudden, right under his nose, someone said, 'Baa-a-a,' and there was Tiberius! He jumped, and Cousin Angelina giggled, and he got all red in the face, and said right out loud 'Damn that lamb!' and then he coughed and tried to look as if he hadn't."

Janet doubled herself up with joy at the recollection.

"So then they went on a little farther, and he began all over again, but Tiberius kept peeking round (I guess he must have thought Cousin Angelina had some sugar for him), and every now and then he would gallop right between them and say, 'Baa, baa.' You know how loud Tiberius can bleat. Mr. Potter tried to chase him off, but it was no use, and at last Tiberius got mad, and he watched, and made a run and a jump and butted him right in the stomach, just like he does Sandy. And Mr. Potter slipped and fell flat, and greened all his clean white trousers. Then Tiberius ran off, bleating, and we had to stuff our handkerchiefs in our mouths for fear they'd hear us, and Cousin Angelina laughed like anything, though she pretended not to."

Uncle Horace also gave way to unholy mirth at the recital of Mr. Potter's misadventures. To be sure, he bore testimony very properly, informing Janet that it was most unladylike to spy on people, and that she would not like to be treated so when her time came; but as he burst out laughing again in the middle of his lecture, possibly the culprit was not very deeply impressed.

Uncle Horace was not so much amused, however, by a story which he heard a few days later. Cousin Angelina had treated him rather worse than usual, owing to an ill-advised jest about Mr. Potter's trousers, and he was gloomily walking along the highroad one afternoon, pondering on the unreasonableness of woman, when he suddenly ran into Letty.

Now Letty was undoubtedly Uncle Horace's favorite, perhaps because she somewhat resembled him, being a gangling child, all knees and elbows, with a hatchet face, large, pensive eyes, and an unbounded appetite for literature; therefore he was startled to see that her small figure drooped in dejection, her large eyes were swollen with crying, and she looked as though no amount of story-books could ever bring consolation.

Upon cross-examination, amid many sniffles, she unfolded the cause of her misery.

It would appear that the pleasures of home must have again palled upon Tiberius, for as Letty was sitting with her book up the old apple-tree at the end of the vegetable garden, she had been roused by a familiar bleat; and peering through the branches saw, to her horror, Tiberius, cherry-colored bow and all, trotting calmly down the high-road. Realizing the gravity of the situation, she had dropped her book into the tomato patch, shinned down the tree, scrambled through the hedge, "scratching my legs dreadfully," and set off full tilt after the prodigal.

A stern chase is a long chase, and it further appeared from Letty's narrative that Tiberius had thoroughly enjoyed himself, loitering slowly till she almost had him in her grasp, then with a fiendish bleat dashing away from her outstretched hands, disregarding alternate threats and blandishments. Still, she believed that he must ultimately have seen the error of his ways, but at a critical moment she suddenly heard the noise of wheels in the rear.

"And I looked round, and there was *that* Mr. Potter, and his great big hound, Old Nick, running behind. Uncle Horace, would you believe it?" The tears on Letty's cheek were dried up by indignation. "Upon my sacred word of honor I heard him sick the dog on! Tiberius, you know, is brave as a lion about people, he's not afraid of them *at all*, but *anybody* would be afraid of a big black dog. Poor darling, he just galloped down the road, and Nick after him, though I called and called them to stop; and Mr. Potter drove right on, and I couldn't keep up, and presently they got round the corner by the quarry, so I couldn't see them." The tears began to flow once more.

"I think I did hear him call Old Nick off then," acknowledged the truthful Letty, as soon as she had regained her voice. "And when I got there I saw them turning off up to the other pike; but—oh Uncle Horace—Tiberius was gone! He'd fallen down into the quarry. I looked over the edge, and though I couldn't see him I could hear him bleating and bleating; and I would have climbed after him myself, but you know we promised mother never to go down there, so I couldn't; and I just had to run home after Anatole and leave Tiberius all alone in that dreadful place. And, oh, suppose he is dead before we get

back, and thinks we have all deserted him!" Letty ended in a perfect outburst of sobs.

It was a curious fact that Uncle Horace, who was generally such a tease, should be so much the nicest comforter to go to whenever a person was really in trouble. Somehow he always made everything seem straight. Presently Letty dried her tears, tucked her hand into his, and they went on together to the rescue.

When they rounded the turn of the road Letty was cheered by the echo of a distant, melancholy bleat; it was evident that Tiberius had not yet passed away; and Uncle Horace, telling her to wait like a good girl and hold his watch, at once clambered down the steep, rocky side of the quarry.

It was really rather a dangerous sort of place, a long, deep gully, running at right angles to the road, from which it was only separated by a hand-rail. In some parts the descent was almost precipitous, with ugly, jagged points of rock, slipping landslides, and loose, treacherous stones; here and there bramble-bushes and creeping briars stretched out thorny fingers; at the bottom lay a sullen pool of stagnant, muddy water.

The time seemed to pass very slowly for Letty. She could hear Uncle Horace scrambling among the rocks and rustling in the bushes. Every now and then a stone would roll clattering down and splash in the water below, then his cheery voice would call back a word of encouragement, and a feeble bleat sounded in reply.

Presently a shout of triumph told that he had reached Tiberius, and Letty sat motionless, her heart in her mouth, while, slipping and sliding, clutching at thorn-bushes and stumbling over the jagged rocks, Uncle Horace slowly clambered back with him to the upper world. At last he reappeared, and crawling under the railing deposited the lamb in Letty's lap, and with a shriek of joy she threw her arms around both.

They were certainly a very dilapidated pair. Uncle Horace was covered with dust and brambles, his face and hands had been scratched by the thorns, and his trousers torn on the rocks; his shoes were entirely ruined, and his necktie in rags, while the belt of his Norfolk jacket had disappeared forever. Tiberius was in even worse case, and Letty groaned over him in anguish.

"His beautiful white wool," she sighed. "Do you think Anatole can ever get it clean? And how will he be able to pick out all those awful briars?" Indeed, it seemed probable that the rest of the family would have to dispense with Anatole's services for a considerable period of time. "Do you know that was a perfectly fresh ribbon," she went on sadly, holding up a sort of cherry-colored mess. "And, oh Uncle Horace, what is the matter with his poor leg?"

Uncle Horace shook his head in reply.

"I'm afraid he's broken it," he admitted. "Never mind, old girl, it can be easily mended, only Tiberius must curb his propensity for butting people in the stomach while he's in splints. Come, Lettykins, it's long past your tea-time; we must be getting along, or they'll have the sheriff out after us."

Letty rose obediently, still clasping Tiberius in her arms. "I don't believe he can walk," she said doubtfully, looking at the limp foreleg.

"That's the game, is it?" said Uncle Horace. "All right, Ma'am." He laughed, and lifted the wounded lamb upon his shoulder. "Now, then. *En avant! Marche!*" The small creature put her hand in his, and they turned their faces homeward.

The sun had set, but a wonderful afterglow lingered, deep, golden orange in the west, flushing overhead into palpitating pink, and fading away with imperceptible gradations amid the pale-violet evening sky. Beneath this soft, ineffable radiance the two figures moved slowly through the peaceful landscape, a quaint and pathetic group, the tall man bearing a lamb on his shoulder, and the little child clinging closely to his side.

Mysterious are the ways of woman. While she was yet far off Cousin Angelina saw the pilgrims approaching, and behold, all of a sudden her heart melted within her.

Cousin Angelina was driving back from the Country Club in a very smart trap, behind a very smart horse, and beside a very smart cavalier. Mr. Potter's costume was immaculate, all his accoutrements were point device. It was possibly for this reason that his face looked redder and his eyes more glazed than usual, while all his heavy perfumes could not banish a faint aroma of Scotch whiskey. He waved his whip at the advancing travellers with a sneer.

"Hullo!" he said, "Little Bopeep has found his sheep. Lord, what an infernal ass your friend Horace does make of himself."

Cousin Angelina's eyes flashed ominously; it was not the first time during the drive that she had been displeased by her companion; but Mr. Potter was not easily rebuffed, and he continued the conversation unmoved.

"I hoped we were rid of the wretched little beast for good and all. Gad, Miss Lina," with a rough chuckle, "you ought to have seen Old Nick giving chase this afternoon. I met the infernal brute making off down the road, and that long-legged Letty after it, fast as she could pike. I thought we'd have a bit of fun, so I just tipped Nick the wink to show them a taste of his going." He exploded into laughter at the recollection. "Jove, what a dust the lamb kicked up; it lit right out for the quarry; and Letty squealed for all she was worth. Nick gave tongue like a good one, I promise you, and I fairly roared."

He turned to Cousin Angelina with a grin, but in spite of the exhilaration produced by the extra "high balls" he dimly realized that she was not very sympathetic.

"Come, now, don't get your back up," he protested. "It was nothing but a joke; of course, I never let the dog touch the little beast." While he was still speaking the cart came in line with the party of wayfarers.

"Stop here!" ordered Cousin Angelina suddenly; and so imperious was her tone that Mr. Potter mechanically obeyed, reining his big, high-stepping horse back upon its haunches.

Before anyone could divine her intention Cousin Angelina had somehow flown over the wheel and was standing in the dusty road beside Uncle Horace. Her scarlet mouth quivered and her eyes were aflame, but she managed to keep her voice under control.

"Your joke seems rather a poor one," she said distantly. "Good-evening, Mr. Potter. I needn't trouble you any further; my cousin will take me home."

As the girl spoke she slipped her hand under Uncle Horace's arm, and he pressed it close, close against his heart, looking down at her with a smile of extraordinary tenderness, while Letty capered for joy and Tiberius faintly bleated a welcome.

It took the unfortunate Mr. Potter a full moment before he understood the situation. When its meaning slowly dawned upon him he broke out with a vindictive imprecation in which the words "confounded little spitfire" were distinctly audible; then, wheeling round, he lashed savagely at his big horse and disappeared amid a whirlwind of dust.

The others went on quietly in the gathering twilight. Letty and Tiberius had the conversation all to themselves, for the two elders hardly spoke, though Uncle Horace's eyes matched the low-hanging evening star and Cousin Angelina's little feet seemed to float on wings. As they entered the garden gate they could hear Anatole carolling in the distance; he came warbling through the wood, presumably bearing supper for the errant Tiberius.

At the sound of his voice Cousin Angelina and Uncle Horace regarded one another dubiously, and then broke out with one accord into joyous and unrestrained mirth, for the air was a favorite Sunday-school ditty of the children, and despite Anatole's peculiarities of accent it was easy to recognize the familiar words:

"I was a wandering sheep,
I could not be controlled,
But now I love my happy home,
I love, I love the fold."

THE OWNERS OF THE DEEP

BY ALDEN CHARLES NOBLE

ONE shall hang to the jolting helm
In the path of the blinding spray,
And he shall hark in the crushing dark
For the surf in the open bay;
And he shall hold through sleet and wind,—
Muscle and heart of steel,—
And take his trick on the seething deck,
The guardsman at the wheel.

One shall ride in the racing ropes,
Glittering, thin, and white,
And he shall cling to the reeling Thing
That's drunk o' the cup of Night;
And he shall perch on the topmost spar
In the face of the tempest fangs,—
Watching afar, like a wakeful star,
Aloft the lookout hangs.

One shall walk the narrow bridge
To the song the breakers sing,
And he shall rule his kingdom stanch
With the might of a sailor king;
He shall hold his hand to her throbbing heart
Through the passionate hour of wreck,
And the toil and tears of the hurried years,—
The man o' the quarter-deck.

These are the emperors of the waves
That slide through the breathless night,
They rule their own from a reeling throne
O'er shimmering fields of white;
They dare the death of the under-world
Where the souls of the sailors sleep,
They walk as kings where the tempest swings,—
The owners of the deep.

THE REGENERATION OF MARY MATHER

By Clara Elizabeth Ward



"AIN'T you sure, Mary? Ain't you got the witness?" The man's resonant voice was strained to the pitch of fanaticism.

"Oh John, I—I can't never testify again; I—I'm 'fraid I ain't born o' the Spirit—John, don't! Don't look that way!" she broke off imploringly. With a passionate cry, she buried her quivering face in his breast. Her arms clung heavily about his neck.

"Lord, help! Oh Lord, help!" he groaned in a dazed, broken fashion.

For one moment the uncouth figure of the man towering above the clinging woman took on an aloof, solitary majesty under the white-washed walls bare of any save shadow frescoes. It was the majesty of poignant suffering, and the little room was awed.

Then, suddenly, the gaunt, dark features softened into tremors of tenderness. "Mary—Mary!" he said huskily, straining her to him in a long, shuddering clasp. His lips pressed the endearing word on brow, hair, and temples. The caress seemed to flutter like a wounded bird, settling at last softly as a dove's wings; but the man's ascetic mouth twisted, and the fine threads under his sombre eyes drew up into little knots.

With swift, fierce tenderness, the woman pulled his face down to hers, smothering her wet lashes against his cheek. His arms tightened about her.

"It's my fault," she sobbed, with little hysterical jerks. "I—I ain't got faith,—I can't—stand out on the promises—I dasn't!"

John's eyes closed spasmodically. "Oh Lord, come! Oh Lord, hear prayer!" he agonized, his face almost ghastly in the flickering lamplight.

A new energy came into her. "I'll try, John!" she whispered under the impulse, drawing him down.

His face twitched with a pang of relief as they knelt by the bed, their tense arms about each other, while he wrestled with the Invisible for his wife's soul; yet it was as it had been; she did not "come out into the light." But the struggle was gone out of her.

Then, as suddenly as Jacob came to princehood through defeat, John took on the patience of a patriarch. With a tenderness more

paternal than conjugal he held Mary in his arms and waited for the rainbow of her smile. His gray eyes had gained an invincible look in their dark, cavernous sockets, though the fine wrinkles that enmeshed his visage were still snarled like tangled skeins.

Since this strange couple had claimed it, the high, narrow room, with its harsh, unpapered walls, had witnessed many unwonted scenes, but never one so solemnly tragic as this. Never until the advent of the cheap chromos, the hanging of which had been a sort of religious service, had these walls even heard of the thing called "spiritual life." In all their earlier associations it had not been this that was most desirable and hard to attain. Never of this had the rooms across the street gossiped through open windows, but rather of such matters as rent bills, lost jobs, new dresses, the cheapest rouge, schemes, loves, hates, quarrels, and worse. The chromos—one representing a woman in a night-gown, clinging to a cross in mid-ocean, with a ghostly Christ hovering near, and one in which the woman at the cross was reaching down to succor another nearly submerged by grass-green waves, which John liked far better—he had bought for their bedroom, not because he prized their artistic value, but for the idea they symbolized; and to Mary's mischievous but worshipful eyes they could not have been more effective had they been the actual texts they were really meant to be.

John Mather had been a local evangelist at the Mill Street Rescue Mission ever since the managers, impressed by his John-the-Baptist personality and moral earnestness, had recognized his "divine call" to this post. A common saying among the "workers" there was, "When John Mather prays, somethin's got to move." His own faith in intercessory prayer, even when "tried as by fire," had never flinched: he believed that spiritual peace comes only through combat. His personal "struggle," though fierce, had been brief, and the "light" had blazed upon his soul with the sudden splendor of sheet-lightning. That tragic moment was forever photographed upon his brain, like the flashlight scene upon the sensitive plate. Yet this, once the fact of supreme consequence in his life, now seemed insignificant; for ever since his eyes had lighted on Mary's pale, dazzling face in the Mill Street mission-room, where he was telling his marvellous "experience," she had been the all-important "burden" upon his heart. If, heretofore, he had been absorbed in "seeking souls" and "living Christ,"—words as common in the phraseology of the mission as the reality for which they stand is uncommon among men,—now his passion had but a single object. "Lord, give me this soul,—this one precious soul!" he would plead in secret, as if there were no other destinies at stake. But he did not insist on Mary's going to the mission, and she knew that her silence during the "season of testimony" caused him more pain than her absence.

When he would come home wan and hollow-eyed under his grizzled

hair, Mary would wince and turn a shade paler, though she was pale at best; but she would quickly cover the shock with a smile so saintly sweet that John would marvel at his anxiety. It seemed like being concerned over the Madonna's soul. Yet this incongruous fancy did not waken in him any sleeping sense of humor. John's mind was a plane, not a sphere. He never thought in curves. Moreover, he knew that the torture would eventually return. He did not always find this household saint: too often there lurked in Mary's loveliness a grain of petulance or mocking mischief which, in truth, had always given him a delirious pleasure,—but was it not for that very reason the more to be distrusted?

If his torture were an intermittent fever, his love—ah, that was a constant passion! His falling in love had been as strange and sudden as his "conversion." On that first night he felt instantly that this woman with the soft, jetty eyes was his destined bride, and was as sure of it as that he was "born of God." Mary's affection seemed equally spontaneous. John never doubted his wife's love.

"If she'd only give herself up to the Lord as she does to me, she'd have the witness," he thought one morning, as with eyes bent on the pavement he swung along to his work. The thought brought him to a sudden stop. Suspicion of Mary, whose sincere desire to become a "child of God" he trusted as his own soul? No; something else stirred within him, raising its head, gliding from corner to corner. "My God! Stamp out this serpent!" he cried, almost aloud. "If she loves me better than you, Lord—oh Lord, help me! she must lay me on the altar—an' *save her soul alive!*"

Some one jostled against him with a curt "Beg pardon!" and a quick look over the shoulder, but the clerks and mill-hands who mostly had the right of way at this hour were familiar with his tall, stoop figure and gaunt visage. The shop-girls had set him down as "half lunny," and the rougher element spoke of him as "that shoutin', spoutin' mission crank," though one fellow had once remarked on his "trusty eye when he looks at ye square."

That night John Mather came home with a face so consciously troubled as to be almost sheepish. Mary noted it with a surging pity that she could scarcely restrain under an attempted gayety during supper.

When she was about to clear away the dishes, John, who had taken up the evening paper, suddenly threw it down and, coming around behind her, seized her by the shoulders almost roughly, holding her so that she could not see his face.

"Mary, you love me? Tell me, do you love me—very dearly?" he demanded in a queer voice.

The question was at once so strangely wistful and imperious—so unlike his ordinary self—that Mary was startled out of all precaution.

"W'y, John!" she exclaimed, putting everything down and turning towards him in a way that made it seem a solemn vow, her face quick with the love that is a living, breathing, growing thing,—“John, I've given you all! Sometimes I think I ain't anythin' more to give—even to the Lord!”

His look terrified her. She saw in it a sudden horror of himself as well as of her words. “Oh John! What—what have I said?” she cried, clutching his hands. “John! Forgive! I didn't mean”—a deathly paleness overspread her face—“oh, have I trampled—on the Son of God?”

His arms comforted her as of old; but in the revulsion from his momentary weakness he braced his lips to the sternness of reproof. What he had feared and guiltily shrunk from facing was true: Mary's love for him was making her forget the peril of her soul.

“Ye must be born again,” was the favorite “must” of his every exhortation both public and private. It was the key-note of his gospel, and a clear consciousness of the new birth was the distinguishing shibboleth of his believer. Mary did not “know” because she had not yet consecrated her whole heart. Was he not aware how possible is self-deception—how devious and subtle the ways of the tempter?—devious and subtle as—love! “Thy servant *first*, Lord,” the exhorter wrung from the husband. He must sift her “as wheat.” Though she wince, he must not falter. He must encourage her to sift herself.

After a while she began to make him her confessor. As judge, he weighed her in the balances. Was he her priest—or pope? His Protestantism never thought of that. She was his lamb, praise God, and he her shepherd. He must save her from the wolves—at any cost. So his conscience kept hers in a cloud of self-condemnation under the hypnotism of love, the while Domestic Happiness crouched by the fire-side, uncertain whether the strange intruder were Tragedy masquerading as Comedy or Comedy as Tragedy. To the household goddess either guise seemed equally unwelcome. Yet, under all this strenuous discipline, how he loved her! It smote him,—as his human frailties always smote him,—but he loved her very weaknesses and sins. Hate them he must, even the least, for her sake! God straighten him to his duty! for it alarmed him at times—the solicitude he aroused in his wife. Then he could scarcely resist pacifying her fears; but like a flash would recur the ironical words, “Peace, peace, when there is no peace,” and silence would hold him.

Mary's confessions of hidden sins grew more and more strained and painful as the days passed. Her unbelief often verged on the strangest credulities.

“I try—oh, I do try not to resist the Spirit, John; but seems as if the more I try, the worse 'tis,” she once argued feebly.

Secretly, she feared that “the Spirit” had left her for good. At

times she gloried in exaggerating her wilfulness; again she would have periods of declaring she had nothing to confess.

These barren seasons troubled her husband most of all, but presently Mary turned off his anxious inquiries with a strangely passive smile. Somehow she appeared different. He could not define the change, but it worried him.

A week later a suspicion leaped into his mind. His wife stood in the centre of the room with her arms upraised, fumbling with the match-safe under the hanging lamp. He sprang towards her, his eyes dilating with the fierceness of wounded love. Whispering in her ear a question that was half reproach, he expected her to blush and smile, then throw her arms about him in a storm of joy, but she only laughed slightly in a queer way.

"Oh, yes. Did the angel tell you, John?" she asked demurely, lifting her eyes. For one fleeting moment they melted with something of the shyness John had looked for. "You mus' find a manger, dear," she said under breath, as if it were a secret; "I'm to be the mother of God! I'm the Virgin Mary, you know."

He recoiled involuntarily, then turned to stone. Mary sacrilegious—and at such a time! But a heavier blow fell; it was as if one who lay half-conscious at a precipice were suddenly swept over by an avalanche. He felt himself whirling through vast space, the monster crushing upon him. Soon he would strike bottom. The red match-safe that had been set swinging under Mary's touch was marking off the time. He watched the slackening motion intently, as one does during the infinite moment of some great crisis.

John had passed from heaven to lowest hell, and Mary had noticed nothing: she was gazing abstractedly at the wall. As Dante might have grasped at some tangible, familiar object while in the midst of an Inferno vision, John caught Mary's hand. He lifted it slowly, looked at it, pressed his lips upon it, trying to recall himself.

"Mary—Mary, you said jus' now—did you speak, Mary?"

She turned her far-away gaze upon him. All at once she changed. Coming closer, she said in coaxing whispers: "Please—please don't worry no more, John! I'm goin' to be born again. The Lord sent an angel an' says not to bother no more—He'll see to it Himself." A look of mystery seemed to veil her face as she went on excitedly: "You think, John, it's our child; but it ain't—it's my soul! My soul's goin' to be born. I c'n feel it strugglin'—strugglin'! I've felt it this good while." She turned aside with a satisfied chuckle.

When consciousness came to the man again the room was hazy with twilight. He was lying in the middle of the floor.

"Mary," he called gently. With that it all came back to him. "My God! My God!" he cried, struggling to his feet.

He found his wife sitting by the window, gazing listlessly at the

416 The Regeneration of Mary Mather

lights across the way. The noises of the street below, mingling with the nearer sounds inside the block,—a discord once so familiar to him,—seemed to belong to a past existence. Was he a spirit on its first return to earth after death?

He gazed upon his bride of a year,—the small, dark head and clear-cut profile, a contrast dazzling as ivory and jet; the form so delicate in outline, so bud-like, yet opening now into a new, far lovelier maturity. Her womanly innocence, her helpless youth, her naïve self-revelations, her tortured sense of guilt, her boundless longing to be, think, and do according to *his* pattern—oh God! how he saw it all now! He, who loved her unto death; who would have hung upon a cross to save her soul,—he, blind fool! had brought her to this! No; it was God! God would not give her the witness—oh, blasphemy! No, no! He *himself* had wrought this ruin, and God's curse, His righteous wrath, was poured out at last! He, John Mather, had dared to offend this little one, *his own wife*, snatching away her morsel of faith, trampling it under foot,—as if one should pluck up a frail little plant scarcely sprouted, and condemn it because it had no root! Spare himself? Had he spared his darling? And yet—and yet!

The specialist could give no definite opinion. The disorder might be temporary. It might develop into hopeless insanity. There was probably a morbid strain in her blood. Save her from this introspection! Take her into the air! Keep her amused! If possible, get her mind off of religion!

The Doctor knew John Mather, and, while he admired his strength of character, he suspected that the man had grounds for condemning himself; but he groaned in spirit when he witnessed the man's agony.

"You thought you were doing your duty, Mather," he once ventured to say, as the latter followed him into the hall. "It's like us fellows who use the knife when we ought to have—God! Mather, don't suffer so! You believe in a God—pray, man, pray!"

The Doctor smiled grimly as he mounted his bicycle. "Turning preacher, eh? And to—John Mather!"

Mary's vagaries grew worse as her "hour" drew nigh. Sometimes she was the sinless Virgin. With tears and moans she would declare herself without spot or blemish. She used to sit by the window idly watching for "the star." Once when the Doctor came in with John she addressed them as "the wise men." She often begged her husband to get the ass ready for the journey. When this hallucination possessed her, she always called him "Joseph." Then, again, she would talk madly for hours about her soul coming to the birth.

"I'm dead, John," she would say, "the old Mary's dead. But don't fret, dear, I'll soon be born again. Gabr'el told me!"

At times she treated John coldly, with a sort of sacred aloofness; yet only he could perfectly control her. She took no notice of his pale,

emaciated face, for she was always preoccupied. A good deal of the time she appeared to be sewing, though she accomplished nothing. John bent over her work, trying to interest her in the little child both had hoped for in earlier days. She looked up at him almost with the old smile and mumbled, "She wrapped Him in swaddling bands."

At the last the Doctor advised taking her to the hospital for special treatment. John spared no expense. Oh, for one sane moment, that she might forgive his cruelty! Yet even now his deepest agony was fear lest her soul were still unregenerate before God. That the hiatus of such suffering and self-reproach could not sever from him his uncertainty as to her spiritual welfare was proof enough that he had hitherto done only his duty, as he must have done it—being John Mather; but he never thought of exonerating himself. Great beads stood on his forehead. "He too will go crazy if this keeps up," others said.

From evening until morning doctors and nurses moved among the shadows of this Gethsemane. The woman raved of the sinless Virgin and the birth of her soul; the man crouched by the bed in the speechless agony of prayer. Death brooded over all. At last the woman slumbered. The Doctor touched the man's arm.

"There is hope. She will live and may——" He got no further, for John Mather fell over in a dead faint.

He believed that he was in heaven after all, though he had dreamed that he and Mary were both lost,—a weird, hideous dream that made him shudder even yet; but he had waked up afterwards and found that they were in heaven, which was much like the other life. Strange! He had not expected heaven to be like this. Mary was always with him and she talked such sweet talk! He only wanted to listen and look at her. He opened his eyes, and there sat Mary as usual except—there was something in her arms.

A pale flush slowly suffused his countenance. He passed his hand weakly across his eyes.

Mary leaned towards him tentatively and laid her hand on his forehead. "John, dear," she began in the tone that always thrilled him, "does the light hurt your poor eyes, dear?" She touched them caressingly. She felt as if the secret pulsing in her finger-tips must heal the dear eyes like a miracle. After waiting what seemed a long time she said tremulously: "You ha'n't never seen him yet, John,—our boy! Doctor said I might fetch him in to-day. Ain't he too sweet?" Her face was one transparent flame of mother glory. "W'y, John, what's the matter? Does it excite you? Sh'll I take him away, dear?" Wifehood, the mother, and Motherhood, the child, were vying with each other in tenderness.

John tried to speak, but the words stuck.

"Never mind, dearest, don't try! You've be'n so awful sick! We dasn't tell you before; but I knew you'd remember he was comin' an' be anxious to see him."

Remember he was coming! Anxious to see him! What did he remember—anything straight?

"I wanted you should see his eyes, John," she continued with a half-petulant frown, "but he would go to sleep—he's such a sleepy—what? I'll lay him down, deary, then I'll come! Ain't it nice I have a cot in here? Oh, we don't sleep here—guess not! Think you'd heard from baby 'fore this if we did."

She was talking on in the same dear, strange, familiar way as before.

"Oh John, John, how could you go an' git so sick, an' I not know nothin' 'bout it?" she demanded in playful reproach as she knelt close to the bed, throwing her arm about him lightly, protectingly. "I was so put out, first along, havin' baby born here an' not in our own home; but, my sakes! when I found you'd be'n so sick, I was, oh, so glad they brought me here too. 'Twas awful good of the Doctor." Her eyes grew large and brilliant. "John, that Doctor's jus'—grand! No; you mus'n't talk, love! I'll talk for both of us." She broke off with a merry laugh, kissing him imperiously.

Then, all at once, her heart melted to infinite pity for his babe-like weakness and the pathos of his intent gaze.

"Oh John! how could I!" she whispered; but as her emotion seemed to distress him, she said cheerfully: "I didn't sense your runnin' down, John, 'cause I was so happy them days 'fore baby was born. How happy we was, dear!" She put her face against his. "I don't remember much about it neither, only't you was so lovely to me, John."

She straightened up. "Sometimes I feel's if I'd be'n where—was it Paul was in the third heaven? I c'n 'most remember seein' an' hearin' such glorious things." Her far-off gaze came back with the old mocking light. "But Doctor,—he don't like it. He says I hadn't ought to remember nothin' but you an' baby." She gave his hand a gleeful pat.

"You'll hurry up an' git well, won't you, dear, so's I can bring baby in ev'ry day," she coaxed. "I've thought such heaps about baby. He's learned me a whol' lot a'ready. He's made a new creature of me—sure! What? Praise the Lord? Yes, praise the Lord! You sh'll shout it in meetin' soon's you git well, if you like!" She laughed, winking the big tears away.

Should he not drink his cup of joy to the full? "*You* done it, John," she said huskily. "You prayed, an' God sent baby! Oh, I'd never knowed for sure if baby hadn't come. You see, I thought I'd

got to do it all myself; but w'y, it's only jus' *be* born,—like baby was born o' me! See? What! Cryin', John? Wronged me? Forgive you? Oh, dearest, dearest, you mus'n't talk—yes, yes; love!"

She touched the electric bell to call the nurse. "Oh, dear! oh, dear! He's flighty again. I've run on too long!" she said under breath, with a frightened look. There came over her a great rush of maternal tenderness as she thought: "Poor John! Fancyin' he's done me some great wrong! I mus' be awful careful not to excite him again."



CHÂTEAU EN ESPAGNE

BY MARIE VAN VORST

I BUILD my castle in the air:
 Why build upon a dreary ground,
 With sharp destruction everywhere,
 And evil mists to cloud around?

I build it in a heavenly blue,
 A bird-filled, rosy atmosphere,
 Where all day long, where all night through,
 My dear dreams, tangible, appear.

With twisted turrets to the clouds,
 With azure bastions, cloud-impearled,
 Fair mantled in ærial shrouds,
 It dominates a weary world.

And pain and grief are far away,
 And word unkind, and cruel calls;
 From day to night, from night to day,
 No care can climb my castle walls.

And when, serene, I enter here,
 You know, I never lonely move,
 I built my castle for you, dear,
 I share my house with you, my love!

My choice in these gray days, how wise!
 I hold a dream of love—and you.
 Look, Sweetheart, when those towers rise
 Our fluttering pennants cleave the blue!

THE BULL IN LAMB-SKIN

By Edward Childs Carpenter

LETHARGY had spread its languid wings over the stock market. The calm of early summer had succeeded the strenuous campaign of spring. Many of the men who made markets were far from the sound of the ticker, seeking to forget its nervous, staccato notes in the music of ocean wave and mountain breeze. In the brokers' offices the tickers ticked off the quotations drowsily, the board-boys marked up the prices lazily, and the traders lolled, smoking, talking—not of the day's business, but of a black-bass fisherman's paradise.

At any other time the unheralded appearance of Slateville and Maydale Railway upon the tape would have passed with slight comment, but in a day so devoid of interest it aroused the curiosity of the Street.

The Slateville and Maydale Railway was a single-track road, a dozen miles in length, that ran through a narrow mountain cleft, joining the towns of Slateville and Maydale. The road had been designed to carry slate from the great quarry in the mountain down to the Alleghany River, where the stone was transferred to barges consigned to Pittsburg, five miles below.

With the opening of quarry and railway the towns of Slateville and Maydale sprang up at either end of the line, and so long as the slate trade flourished railway and towns thrived. But the day came when it ceased to be profitable to operate the quarry. The proprietors packed up their plant and moved west. The business of the Slateville and Maydale cut off, the stock dropped from par to the price of a ballad.

A year passed, and where once lay a smartly kept road-bed, with traffic-polished rails, now rusted and rotted a neglected line. Where once daily steamed a score of freights, now weekly ran a solitary, decrepit car and engine, carrying produce from the outlying farms about the almost deserted Slateville to the decaying wharf at dreary Maydale.

The history of the Slateville and Maydale was well known to the Street. Therefore, more was the wonder that its stock could find a purchaser.

All day long Slateville and Maydale continued to come out in blocks of ten, fifty, a hundred, and just as often as it appeared it found a buyer.

Late in the afternoon a bulletin was issued by a news agency stating that a company had been organized for the purpose of grinding the thousands of tons of refuse slate into powder and converting it by some patent process into paving-bricks.

The Street at once labelled the story a "wild-cat scheme," especially as the names of the promoters were unknown in the world of finance.

Still, the stock appeared upon the tape at irregular intervals, and for want of other amusement, the buying being persistent, the traders sold Slateville and Maydale short.

One of the mysterious buyers of the old slate road was a young man, Daniel Moran. Dan thought he knew what he was doing. He had what he considered a "sure thing." His "tip" came straight from head-quarters. He had it of a woman—a young woman—a rather piquante and fascinating young woman. Her father, Alexander Calvin Wheatly, was president of the Consolidated Electric Power Company, a man who stood high in the financial world, a man whose name alone was buoyant enough to float the wildest scheme ever promoted. That was because his name spelt dividends.

According to Etta Calvin Wheatly, "papa" was going to be the president of the newly organized Slate Brick Company, which was bound to make the stock of the Slateville and Maydale Railway worth its weight in government bonds. It was a secret,—a great secret,—all that about "papa," and not to be breathed for worlds. She had overheard part of a conference between "papa" and the promoters of the Slate Brick Company when "papa" had agreed to father the scheme. Of course, they wished nothing said until they had gobbled up the stock of the Slateville and Maydale.

Etta told all this to Dan because she had determined that he must make his fortune,—in other words, she loved him.

No man, in or out of love, ever yearned more for a fortune than Daniel. He had discovered that a fortune was absolutely necessary before he could put through a very close corporation he had in mind and heart—The Daniel Moran-Etta Calvin Wheatly Home and Fireside, Love and Bliss Company, Limited. Dan was given to understand this in the most stenographic terms when he broached the subject to Alexander Calvin Wheatly.

The way was clear now, though. Etta had in her own right twenty-five thousand dollars, the bequest of her mother, in all kinds of gilded securities. She marketed these, unknown to her father, and

turned the cash over to Dan, with instructions to buy Slateville and Maydale. At first he emphatically declined to touch her money, but Etta reminded him that she had been reared in the atmosphere of finance and knew a sure thing; more than that, if he did not accept her aid she would consider he had resigned from the presidency of the D. M.-E. C. W. H. & F., L. & B. Co., Ltd.

So Daniel, like a true lover, stuffed his pride away down in the bottom drawer, underneath his shirts and socks, and bought Slateville and Maydale.

He had been very quietly accumulating a line of Slateville and Maydale shares for a week or more, in the face of a five-point rise in the stock caused by the buying of the Slate Brick Company insiders and by an ephemeral stampede of the "shorts" to cover, when the stock dropped back and started on a downward course that brought joy to the hearts of the "Bliss Company."

The cause of this slump was that Alexander Calvin Wheatly had discovered, after a characteristic careful investigation, that the Slate Brick Company's scheme for making a slate brick would cost more than any brick ever employed outside of the street-paving department of Paradise. Consequently he not only declined to father the company, but proceeded to sell Slateville and Maydale short.

He was moved to this latter course by the statement of a member of the Slate Brick Company to the effect that, although their patent process was not perfected, they would yet show him that they could make slate bricks at a profit, and intended to hold all the Slateville and Maydale stock they had and to pick up more when it reached bargain prices.

Of course, Alexander Calvin Wheatly said nothing to Etta about his resignation of the presidency of the Slate Brick Company; and since his association with the enterprise had not been made public, no one but the insiders knew of the severe blow that the concern had received.

Still, Daniel bought Slateville and Maydale. Still, Alexander Calvin Wheatly sold Slateville and Maydale short. Still, the Street wondered.

As the price sank lower and lower, an enterprising newspaper man fell afoul of the story of Alexander Calvin Wheatly's intended fathering of the Slate Brick Company and his subsequent resignation of the presidency.

Then there was more short selling, and a terrific drop in the price of Slateville and Maydale.

When Dan and Etta saw the story in a morning newspaper they began to talk about a receivership for the "Bliss Company."

They figured out their first balance-sheet thus:

Assets.

Cash in bank.....	\$137.00	
The controlling interest in the Slateville and Maydale Railway, figured at the present market price..	1077.00	
Total.....	—	\$1,214.00

Liabilities.

Cash advanced by Etta Calvin		
Wheatly.....	\$25,000.00	✓
Shy.....	\$23,786.00	✓

"It might be worse," remarked Etta cheerfully.

"Y-e-s," muttered Daniel.

"Anyway, we practically own the road, don't we?"

"We certainly do!"

"Then why not elect you president and me secretary and treasurer?—the annual election's scheduled for Thursday."

"What's the use? If we voted ourselves salaries, we'd wreck the road."

"But, then, think of the fun! We'd take trips of inspection in your private car—that would be lovely! We'd invite our friends!"

"You're entitled to all the fun you can get out of it, you sweet imp. If you say so, I'll reorganize the road."

And he did. He formed a Board of Directors, chosen among his friends, who elected him president and Etta Calvin Wheatly secretary and treasurer.

This astonishing change in the management of the Slateville and Maydale so incensed Alexander Calvin Wheatly that he showed Daniel the door and cut down Etta's allowance.

Upon the heels of the reorganization of the company came a rumor that the Swabbash Railroad, seeking an entrance into Pittsburg, was thinking of buying the Slateville and Maydale. Otherwise the Swabbash, to carry out its project, would have to tunnel the mountain or make a wide detour, for the Slateville and Maydale had the right of way through the mountain cleft.

Immediately there was a stampede on the part of the Slateville and Maydale shorts to cover, and the stock in a day's trading leaped up to fifty, its par value.

"I wish I could kiss you through the phone," cooed Etta, as Dan, at a safe distance from the parental cane, told her of a conference he had had with President Harwood, of the Swabbash, when that official had offered to buy the stock of the Slateville and Maydale at par. "You're going to sell, aren't you?" she asked.

"Sure! but not at par," answered Daniel. "They've got to dance for it first, then pay the fiddler!"

The Bull in Lamb-Skin

"Good for you, dear! Hold out for double the par!"

"That's the idea!"

"Oh—Dan!—you're—you're—glorious!"

"Thanks! How's papa?"

"O-o-o-h!" Dan heard her piquante laugh rippling over the wire. "O-o-h, he's furious! You know he's terribly short of Slateville and Maydale." Then in an intense whisper, "Squeeze him; squeeze him, Dan!"

"I will—wait!"

The time for squeezing the shorts had not come in all its fulness, for the deal had yet to be closed, and many of the shorts were holding off from the high price at which the stock was quoted with the hope that the merger would fall through. They did not know the shrewdness of Daniel—that was their misfortune.

Dan was silent on the subject of the deal, neither would the Swabbash people talk.

Harwood was wroth, because Dan had declined his offer to purchase the stock at par. Dan was cool, confident. He asked double the price proffered.

Daniel met the officers and directors of the Swabbash in secret conference. After regarding the smooth-faced young man for a moment with a cold look, President Harwood said:

"Mr. Moran, when you are ready to talk sense, we are ready to consider the purchase of your road, but the price you ask is ridiculous."

"Ridiculous! ridiculous!" echoed the directors.

"Gentlemen, good-morning!" Dan picked up his hat.

"One moment, Mr. Moran! We—eh—might compromise." Harwood stroked his chin nervously.

"I'll take a hundred a share or nothing." Dan's hand was on the door-knob.

"Would sixty-five interest you?"

"It's a hundred and ten now."

"Come, Mr. Moran, be reasonable."

"One hundred and twenty-five."

"Look here, young man—our limit—the very utmost we could afford—would be—but you'll not listen—would be—eh—seventy-five."

"It's a bargain. I'll take seventy-five."

Dan's move was wholly unexpected. Harwood had only mentioned seventy-five tentatively, expecting to compromise eventually on sixty-five or seventy. He had not only walked into the trap with his eyes open, but he had also gobbled the bait. He pulled a wry face, and the directors, like so many puppets, imitated him. Harwood's word,

though, was given. He closed the deal, agreeing to buy the entire stock of the road—that too had been one of Dan's conditions—at seventy-five.

The news of the consummation of the sale threw the shorts into a panic.

While the stock was dancing sky-high Dan and Etta stood by the stock-ticker in the Slateville and Maydale office, singing off the quotations and madly embracing each other.

Presently Jones, who was at once General Manager, Traffic Agent, Auditor, Chief Engineer, Engineer of Maintenance of Way, Superintendent, Chief Clerk, Stenographer, Janitor, and Office Boy, entered with the card of Alexander Calvin Wheatly and handed it to the President. The President showed the card to the Secretary and Treasurer.

"I guess you'd better leave him entirely to me," suggested Dan.

Etta laughed. "No! As an officer of the Slateville and Maydale and your full partner in the 'Bliss Company' it is my duty to advise you and share your responsibility." Then, turning to the other officials of the Slateville and Maydale, she bade Jones "show the gentleman in."

Alexander Calvin Wheatly, with a guileless look on his florid face, his silk hat in one hand, his ebony cane in the other, and his frock-coat tightly buttoned over his broad chest, stood undecided in the doorway.

"Come in, Mr. Wheatly," greeted Daniel blandly. "Pleasant day."

There was the suspicion of a twinkle in the eye of the President of the Consolidated Electric Power Company as he took a chair, ignored the presence of his daughter, and addressed himself to Dan.

"You're a very clever young man, Mr. Moran," began the financier suavely.

"Thanks!" Dan's face was a blank.

"And now that I have discovered you, I propose to act very handsomely."

"You dear thing!" Etta was standing on a stool by the ticker. She made a profound salaam.

The gentleman in the frock-coat was apparently oblivious to the young woman's presence. He wiped his glasses and continued,—

"I have decided to give you a position of trust, with a very fair remuneration to start on, in the Power Company."

"What's the salary?" Etta's question, though pertinent, left her still unrecognized.

"The salary," resumed Mr. Wheatly placidly, "will be determined upon when you have shown what you can do, Mr. Moran."

"I rather fancy I've done that already," ventured Dan.

"Slateville and Maydale—79—80," put in Etta, hanging over the tape.

Alexander Calvin Wheatly fingered his cane nervously. "You'll be very foolish, Mr. Moran, if you refuse this position; it's a great opportunity for a young man of energy."

"Slateville and Maydale—81," mused the girl at the ticker.

"I've a scheme of my own," returned Dan.

"But you've no capital," suggested the President of the Power Company.

"Oh, that'll be all right when you've covered your shorts in Slateville and Maydale."

"Slateville and Maydale—83," quoted the railway's Secretary and Treasurer.

"I didn't come here to be bullied!" exclaimed the "short interest" with a determined shake of his head.

"Oh papa!" Etta looked up from the tape and shook her pretty head sadly.

Alexander Calvin Wheatly rose with an injured air, much out of harmony with the light in his eye, and retreated to the door.

"I'm sorry you've put that construction on the situation, Mr. Wheatly," remarked Dan indifferently. "I'm quite ready to deal with you on a friendly basis—I——"

The financier wheeled about suddenly. "If that's true, then you will ask me no such absurd figure as 80 for enough Slateville and Maydale stock to cover my shorts."

"Slateville and Maydale—85," came the still, small voice from the ticker.

Dan thrust his hands deep in his trousers-pockets and faced his visitor. "I've no intention of squeezing you, Mr. Wheatly, but——"

"You do intend to squeeze me!" With that irrelevant interjection the young woman stopped suddenly, caught up the tape, and shouted, "Slateville and Maydale—88!"

Alexander Calvin Wheatly resumed his chair.

"I was about to remark," added Daniel, "that if you would—eh—withdraw your—eh—objection—eh—that is—if you—eh——"

"If you'd give us your blessing, you could have the stock at 85!" Etta dropped the tape and slipped her arm through Dan's.

"So that's the price?" The financier glared at them like a stage-father. "Suppose I refuse your terms?"

"Then you'll have to buy the stock in the open market at 88."

"No, Dan, dear,"—the girl went to the ticker,— "it's 90 now."

The face of the President of the Power Company twitched in a most peculiar way. He squirmed in his chair, he coughed, he smoothed his silk hat, he blew his nose, he cleared his throat; then he spoke.

"Of course — eh — there's no use — in getting angry — over it — I——"

He said no more. The Secretary and Treasurer of the Slateville and Maydale interrupted him by throwing herself violently into his arms. "I knew you'd come around, popsy, d-e-a-r!"

"What? eh? hum! I——" objected the financier.

"Dear me! I've mussed your hair! your scarf's twisted!" Etta deftly plastered down the gray hair over the bald spot, adjusted the white tie, and curled herself up in his lap.

Dan turned to the ticker. "Slateville and Maydale—91—92," he observed with an air of just realizing the strength of the stock.

"Isn't he clever, popsy?"

"Too confoundedly clever to keep out of the family."

Etta stifled the speaker with a terrific hug, then, transferring her demonstrations to Dan, smiled bewitchingly and whispered: "It floats! It floats!"

"Eh? What's that, sweet imp?"

"The Daniel Moran-Etta Calvin Wheatly Home and Fireside, Love and Bliss Company, Limited!"

While Alexander Calvin Wheatly, with a whimsical frown, was figuring on the back of an envelope, Dan caught up the tape, wound it about his partner's white throat, and—kissed her.



THE FLIGHT OF THE HERONS

BY WILLIAM LUCIUS GRAVES

A CROSS the valley from some hidden height,
Arcadian call to my lost boyhood dear,
A quail pipes, sweetly clear;
And as I turn to that old fresh delight,
Wind on my cheek,—lo there, my heart, the heron-flight!

Down stream they come on mighty, buoyant wings,
Strange, silent voyagers of summer air,
Whose windy paths they dare
All heedless of the wild hawk where he swings
A-quiver far above the water's murmurings.

They near, they pass, set sharp against the sky,
Grotesques some Orient artist might have drawn
Blue on a golden dawn;
They pass, are gone like thin leaves blown cloud-high,—
And oh, my heart is mad to follow where they fly!

TEN MINUTES

AN ENTR'ACTE

By A. H. Shirres

AS Philip Hone, a struggling young artist, followed a footman up Sir Arthur Bredham's staircase, he rapidly and somewhat nervously reviewed the short chain of circumstances which brought him here. He had been down in the country one day last week, and on his return was met by the amazing intelligence that Sir Arthur Bredham—the well-known art critic and patron—had called, and finding him absent had gone into his studio and spent some considerable time there. The day following brought a note of apology in terms somewhat vague from Sir Arthur, and, what was a hundredfold more surprising, an invitation to dinner.

And here, as a dozen times before that evening, the young man's thoughts leaped into fairyland. Was it possible that his work showed signs of merit unmistakable enough to call forth recognition such as this? Was it possible that he was on the eve of becoming famous? But no, no! With that vigorous control of the imagination only known to those who have trod early in the valley of disappointment, he thrust such hopes from him. Still, when the door opened he trembled.

"Mr. Philip Hone," announced the footman.

It was a very large and somewhat sombre room, but a glorious fire sent flashes of light towards him, bringing rich colors out of subdued draperies and urns and bowls of ancient crockery. And on the wide mantelshelf, against which his host was lightly leaning, a little group of dainty Sèvres figures seemed beckoning a mischievous welcome to him in the dancing, flickering rays.

Sir Arthur advanced and greeted the young man courteously. He again regretted that unceremonious intrusion into Mr. Hone's studio, but must plead extenuating circumstances and the fact that in former days he had known something of Mr. Hone's family. "Why, there was a Philip Hone at school with me—your father, perhaps?" he suggested. Philip Hone, at first too bewildered to speak, looked at the dark, furrowed, prematurely old face, with its leaping Oriental eyes, noted the grace of the lithe figure, marked the long, noiseless step with which he was piloted to an adjacent chair. Very fair and frank

the young man looked, here, where the light of a shaded lamp fell full on his features—and extraordinarily astonished into the bargain.

"I fear I have come a little too early," he remarked, perhaps indiscreetly, noting that they were the sole occupants of the great room.

Sir Arthur laughed lightly. "Say, rather, a little too late. There will be those here, as I mentioned in my note, whom you may find it advantageous to meet. But what I did not mention is that I took the liberty of asking you to be here at rather an earlier hour than anyone else. You are a little late, but we have still ten minutes, and, Mr. Hone, I have something I wish particularly to say to you."

The young man bowed in silence. There was something so chilling in his host's tone, now, that every pleasant fairy castle fell shivering to the ground.

"We have just, I believe, ten minutes," he pursued calmly, "and therefore I had better get to work without delay. Against the wall of your studio there rests a large canvas on which the outlines of a picture have been traced. It represents the interior of a diligence, so far as one can judge, on the way through a wooded and perhaps snowy country. The general characteristics of the various passengers are roughly placed, but the face of one only clearly delineated. It is the face of the young lad in the corner; his eyes, you may remember, shine forth like stars from amidst the unfinished chaos of their surroundings. You have been heard to say, I understand, that this picture is born of a personal reminiscence. Well, may I ask you to tell me, as briefly as possible, what this personal experience is?"

Philip Hone started slightly at the mention of the picture, a rapid smile curving the lips which had before begun to fall into what was perhaps a habitual expression of despondency. He listened, astonished, to Sir Arthur's request, which yet, in these novel circumstances, did not strike him with the force it would elsewhere.

"I can do so in a few words," he answered quietly. "As you may have presumed, I myself was a passenger in that diligence running betwixt two small towns in a densely wooded part of Normandy, the snow, as you correctly judged, weighing down the trees and lying deep on the ground. It was a tempestuous moonlight winter's evening. My seat was exactly opposite that of the figure which has attracted your attention in the picture, and whose original had occupied my intent—I am afraid not too polite—scrutiny all along the route. The lad was miserably attired, and held a worn-out violin to his shivering breast, but a more beautiful countenance I have never seen, and I have done but feeble justice to the great, solemn, lustrous dark eyes. The lips puzzled me, showing, as they did, glimpses of lovely youthful lines under a raven mustache in a most premature state of develop-

ment. The moon, I remember, disappeared just before we reached the solitary little forest hostel of Saint Jacques, and we began to round the last hilly corner in total darkness. Suddenly a great glare of red light illuminated the snowy road, and starting up we sat blinking at the flames of a huge bonfire roaring and hissing in the courtyard of the inn. Just then, Sir Arthur, my glance fell on the—the lad. But why should I relate this reminiscence of mine in so enigmatic a manner?" he ended with a laugh. "The fierce mustache had fallen off."

"Had fallen off?" echoed the other in the same undemonstrative tones, but with a slight touch of inquiry.

"Yes, into a small and particularly shapely brown hand, which the next instant was clasped over the mouth. The little musician jumped out of the diligence and disappeared into the inn, but not before those lovely eyes had met mine with a glance defiant yet full of womanly pleading. The lad, of course, was no lad at all, but a strikingly beautiful young girl."

"And then?" inquired Sir Arthur quietly, with a little shudder, stretching his hand nearer the fire.

"And then?" repeated the young artist blankly, for the first time beginning to look somewhat embarrassed. "Well, then there was a ten minutes' stoppage at the inn."

"Of which you also availed yourself. And then?"

"I! Oh, yes, and then went on with the diligence. The little musician went no farther. She was going across country on the morrow to play at a fair." Mr. Hone's accents had grown more and more halting, but rather in uncertainty as to the purport of such a cross-examination than from any other feeling. Suddenly he resumed in a tone which had in it a good deal of spirit and a slight suspicion of ridicule: "As to our proceedings during that ten minutes' stoppage at the inn, I shall be happy to enlighten you; if, indeed (and Heaven knows why), a trivial incident in the lives of two poor Bohemians, down in their luck, arouses your interest. We related our mutual experiences of hard times. The girl was an American, and had fallen into her present state of destitution through a series of pitiful mishaps. I think the male attire had been donned for that occasion only, —certainly I trust the mustache had; but as the matter was not so much as touched upon in our brief conversation, I hope you will excuse me if I am unable to offer a definite opinion on the point. Of course, we fell to boasting—like the two foolish children we were—of all the grand things we would do in our respective arts. She was bent on earning enough to study at a Conservatorium. If there was a little talk more frivolous and foolish, I alone was to blame; I too (but

pray pardon my mentioning such a thing) was solely responsible for the laughing, fraternal kiss with which our interview terminated."

A long picture-gallery opened into the drawing-room. As Mr. Hone ceased speaking the distant rustle of a woman's dress became audible. Sir Arthur took a hurried step forward, and then, as the noise drifted leisurely away, paused and returned to his place by the fire.

"Mr. Hone," he said somewhat abruptly, "forgive my curiosity as to what you rightly call a trivial incident in the lives, as you say, of two poor Bohemians. It was so—trivial, natural—even quite innocent. You will forgive me when I tell you that chance had made me acquainted with the tale of your picture, but vilely distorted and exaggerated. Yet sometimes a man is not himself: the serpent crawls still, Mr. Hone,—though not in the Garden of Eden,—and in a man's moments of weakness can make its hiss heard. But the fact that I asked you here as my guest sufficiently proves that my own conviction accorded with what you have told me. Well, your picture, even in its present condition, is astonishingly clever and extremely capable in its management of technicalities. Under certain circumstances it would doubtless command a high price. However, someone told me you would be glad to get twenty pounds sterling for it. I offer you one hundred pounds, but on condition that you put it in the fire on your return home to-night."

"Sir Arthur!" gasped the young man. He gazed bewildered into the anxious face watching him. One hundred pounds—one hundred pounds. It rang in his ears, it quivered before his eyes. There was nothing very startling in the sum perhaps to Sir Arthur, but to poor Philip Hone it meant a mine of wealth.

"Agreed," he managed to say, wondering not at all yet about the condition of purchase, seeing only yet the yellow gold.

The other breathed a sigh of relief. "Good! Well, but that is not all. I have said something as to your talent. In the long run you might achieve success alone. But I know your circumstances, I am aware of the fallen fortunes of your house, and how you, poor lad, have striven to help. It might come, Philip, but prematurely gray hairs would pave its passage, and a seared and wearied heart perhaps be all that was left you when it did. And now think how differently you enter the lists with me for a friend and patron. You know very well that it is not too much to say I can give you fame—I can give you fortune—*now*. And this I am ready to do,—*but* you must pass me your word that I hold the future monopoly of that reminiscence."

As the words left his lips the drawing-room door opened, and a tall, graceful young woman in a dress of soft white silk came into the room. Sir Arthur was already stooping in a careless attitude over the fire.

Philip Hone's brain was still whirling, but he swiftly realized that this must be the lovely Lady Bredham. Sir Arthur had recently returned from a prolonged stay abroad, and had brought with him a young wife whose beauty was already very famous. She advanced smiling, the light playing with the pearls at her throat, on the little crimson dagger near her heart, but for the moment leaving the face in shadow. And then she stepped into the broad path of bright fire-light—and abruptly paused. Philip Hone too must have made an awkward step backward, for a little table laden with curios jangled and rocked at his hurried touch. Sir Arthur still continued idly toying with the little poker amidst the crackling, leaping flames.

It was only a long moment, yet the girl's face had grown very white, the eyes—flashing between the two men—extraordinarily piteous in expression. Crossing rapidly to her husband's side, she put her hand on his arm.

"Arthur, you have not introduced us," she said breathlessly, adding the next instant in tones so passionately agitated that one could well believe she spoke without realizing the words that came, "Is it—that I have come ten minutes too late?"

Sir Arthur put down the poker, the furrows on his brow once more seeming to deepen—to give him that air of premature age which had at first astonished Philip Hone. He slipped his hand quietly over hers and made the formal introduction.

"Yes, you have come late," he said sadly, "but I am quite—quite pleased, dear, that you have come when you have." But there was deep meaning in his voice, and emotion in his dark eye as it rested on her.

OUR LITTLE NEED

BY ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

A LITTLE love, a little life,
A little woman for a wife,
A little brood to come and go—
A little mound where grasses grow.

A little fire to warm the heart,
A little cheer before we part,
A little hope, a little trust,
Before the ashes and the dust.

THE TRIFLER

BY

ARCHIBALD EYRE



PHILADELPHIA

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